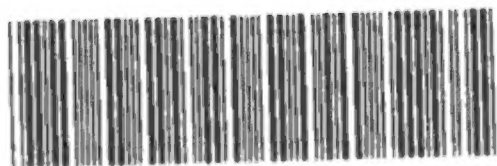






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**THE**  
**L I F E**  
**OF**  
**OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.**

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**VOL. I.**





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THE  
L I F E  
OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

FROM  
A VARIETY OF ORIGINAL SOURCES.

BY  
JAMES PRIOR,  
FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES; MEMBER OF THE  
ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY;  
AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF BURKE, ETC.

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.  
VOL. I.

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LONDON:  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.  
MDCCCXXXVII.

TO  
HIS GRACE,  
THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND,  
K.G.

&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD DUKE,  
THE following pages, and the new and more perfect edition of the Miscellaneous Works of Goldsmith, which will immediately succeed them, originated during your Administration of the Irish Government, at the time when circumstances afforded me the honour of an introduction to your Grace ; and to you they are now appropriately inscribed. An Earl of Northumberland was the first to offer assistance and patronage to the Poet ; and for the amusement of his Countess, the beautiful bal-



lad of the “ Hermit” was written. Were I to assign further motives for the present address, they would be the moderation of your character and measures in the Government of his native country during a period of much political disquiet ; and the princely munificence extended, where it was so much wanted, toward her public Charities. These are merits which, among her many angry and unhappy contentions, admit of no diversity of opinion ; and claim from every native of Ireland that respect which is felt by,

MY LORD DUKE,

Your Grace’s most obedient

And very faithful servant,

JAMES PRIOR.

## PREFACE.

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**B**IOGRAPHY has been justly characterised as combining much useful instruction with a large share of amusement ; and no description of it has been more popular than the lives of literary men. One of the reasons of this preference probably is, that we are naturally curious about what is more particularly considered the history of Mind ; and in such accounts we are often enabled to trace it in active operation while giving birth to productions that have won the admiration of mankind. Neither is the personal career of such persons without many, and sometimes uncommon vicissitudes : from their lives we turn to their writings with increased interest ; and delight in contrasting perhaps the follies and weaknesses that have marked the one, with the wisdom and excellence shown in the other.

To this agreeable department of literature, Ireland, though not deficient in eminent names, has contributed less than the sister countries ; and her zeal has been thence thought lukewarm in celebrating the praises of her offspring. The cause, however, is not owing to indifference to their fame, but to the fact of the individuals having commonly transferred their talents to England, and thus lost something of that nationality which would have more particularly identified them with their native country. Among her divines, philosophers, and statesmen, there are several whose lives yet remain to be written. The remark applies equally to her poets : indeed, there are few of those whose history is familiar to the general reader. Of Roscommon, for instance, although a nobleman and necessarily moving in a sphere of life more open to observation than men of

inferior rank, little comparatively is known ; little at least of that species of detail which gives biography its chief charm. The same may be said of Denham ; for Denham, though of English ancestry, being born in Ireland, may fairly be claimed as an Irish writer. With regard to Farquhar, whose genius for comedy was not excelled by either Congreve or Sheridan, little of a satisfactory nature is recorded of his private life ; nay, we have hardly any details of his more public career, excepting the facts of his having been an actor upon the stage, and afterwards an officer in the army : of Boyse (author of the “ Deity”) we know only that he was of reckless and dissipated habits ; of John Cunningham, known for his ballads and a variety of poetical pieces between 1750 and 1770, that he was a strolling player ; and even Goldsmith was enabled to glean little concerning Parnell. Southerne lived long enough to be enabled himself to contradict the story commonly told, and not yet expunged from some of the biographical dictionaries, of his having been born in England and brought up a servitor at Oxford, instead of being, as he really was, a native of Dublin, and educated at his own expense in her University. And Dr. Johnson has thought proper to consider the birthplace of Swift as in some measure doubtful.

To the list of writers of whom we know less than their reputation deserves, must be added GOLDSMITH. A biographical preface is all that has been hitherto awarded him, and it will scarcely be contended that he is unworthy of any thing more. Such sketchy outlines of a life, much of it marked by honourable literary ambition, much of it by daily struggles for daily bread, and parts of it by the imprudences common to such a state of existence, can never be satisfactory, because they must inevitably omit all, or nearly all, that we most wish to know. Biography to be useful must be minute ; to be entertaining also it must be

minute. Without, in short, it enters into detail, we can never know much of the individual, or of the private history, often not the least interesting portion of the history of his works; we cannot indulge that rational curiosity, which all such persons are calculated to inspire; we cannot trace how his life and his writings bear upon each other; under what particular circumstances the former was passed, and under what incitements or successes, what difficulties or privations, the latter were written. We shall be the more surprised at the neglect in this instance, on considering, that almost as soon as he thought proper to affix his name to his productions, it became celebrated; that for several years he occupied, next to Dr. Johnson, perhaps the largest space in the public eye; and even before death took his stand by common consent as a great English classic. No writer, excepting perhaps Voltaire, has written so variously, and, in such departments as he himself selected, so well. He stands alone in our literature for having produced some of the best Poems, one of the best Novels (in the opinion of all foreigners the very best), many of the best Essays, some of the best Plays, and in the estimate of Dr. Johnson—an opinion which we cannot safely controvert, since for fifty years past popular favour has given them an unbounded circulation—some of the most useful Histories. Strong testimonies to his merit are borne by every competent writer who has had occasion to mention him. Two of these, which in addition to others will be found in the concluding chapter of this work, may be new to the reader, new at least as to the knowledge of who were the authors; one on his prose style being by the late Earl of Dudley, and the other on his poetry by Sir Walter Scott. Both are from the Quarterly Review.

That the Life of such a man should not have been written with more regard to extended inquiry, is only to

be explained by the circumstances of his situation. He had lived for many years away from his native country; he possessed no connexions, and had formed no domestic ties in that which he had chosen : no relative was at hand even in his dying moments to perform the last offices of humanity, to collect the scattered fragments of his genius, or take that active interest in his fame which in general relatives only feel. His literary friends indeed were numerous and warm ; celebrated themselves, and capable of imparting celebrity to others. Some, it appears, were not unwilling to assume the office of biographer, but wanted the necessary knowledge connected with his earlier life, which his relatives only could impart; and they being tardy in collecting and communicating facts, the time had passed by when those for whom the information was intended were able or disposed to follow up their design.

The Poet himself probably expected that his friend Dr. Thomas Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore, should have held the pen of biographer, if we may judge from a communication made to that friend on one occasion at Northumberland House. He, however, if the design was ever formed, surrendered it to Dr. Johnson for an intended edition of the Poet's works, as appears by a letter to Mr. Malone, dated June 16th, 1785,\* in which the Bishop says—

“ I have long owed you my very grateful acknowledgments for a most obliging letter which contained much interesting information, particularly with respect to Goldsmith's Memoirs. The paper which you have recovered in my own handwriting, giving dates and many interesting particulars relating to his life, was dictated to me by himself one rainy day at Northumberland House, and sent by me

\* MS. Correspondence communicated by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

to Dr. Johnson, which I had concluded to be irrecoverably lost. The other memoranda on the subject were transmitted to me by his brother and others of his family, to afford materials for a life of Goldsmith which Johnson was to write and publish for their benefit. But he utterly forgot them and the subject; so that when he composed Goldsmith's Epitaph he gave a wrong place for that of his birth—*Elphin*\*, which is accordingly so sculptured in Westminster Abbey."

In extenuation of the charge against Dr. Johnson it should be stated, that this seeming neglect of the fame of an old friend, arose from another cause. The copy-right of one of Goldsmith's pieces (*She Stoops to Conquer*) was still the property of Carnan the bookseller (surviving partner of Francis Newbery); and Carnan being "a most impracticable man and at variance with all his brethren," in the words of Malone to the Bishop†, he refused his assent, and the project for the time fell to the ground. When his term had expired, it was again resumed by the friends of the poet, with the view of assisting his brother Maurice, then in a state of pecuniary distress. Of this design, the Bishop writes as follows to Malone:—

"Dr. Wilson's very curious letter‡, which you thought lost, I have happily in my possession, so that we may readily compile a good, at least a correct account, of the principal events of Dr. Goldsmith's life; and, with the assistance of one or other of his friends, may be able to

\* It was the impression of Malone, in 1778, and probably of the Bishop also, that *Elphin* was the birthplace of Goldsmith; but subsequent information corrected this error, as appears in the memoir prefixed to the miscellaneous works printed in 1801.

† MS. letter; Sept. 28th, 1786.

‡ Given in a subsequent page of this work, although unaccountably omitted, like many other things, in the memoir prefixed to the miscellaneous works in 1801.



fill up an account for almost all the time he spent from his leaving Edinburgh till he rose into public notice. He has an only brother living\*, a cabinet-maker, who has been a decent tradesman, a very honest, worthy man, but he has been very unfortunate, and is at this time in great indigence. It has occurred to such of us here (*Dublin*) as were acquainted with the Doctor, to print an edition of his poems, chiefly under the direction of the Bishop of Killaloe and myself, and prefix a new, correct life of the Author, for the poor man's benefit; and to get you, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Steevens, &c. to recommend the same in England, especially among the members of *The Club*."

Proposals were accordingly printed, one of which is in the writer's possession, and two hundred copies transmitted to Malone, through his brother Lord Sunderlin, then going to England, for distribution. The volume was to be a quarto, the price a guinea, and a memoir was promised, written from the immediate dictation of the Poet himself; that is to say, the memoranda taken down by the Bishop. Malone however proposed a change of plan; he wished that there should be added to the poems, a selection of his prose miscellanies, part of which had been printed with his name, and part were unacknowledged, though known to be his by literary friends, printers, and booksellers: this it was considered would give more variety and novelty to the work.

A Life, however, was to be written; and this the Bishop, although best qualified for the purpose by long intimacy and thorough knowledge of Goldsmith, added to his acknowledged talents, was too busy or too indolent to supply. In compliance with his wish, however, a memoir,

\* The Bishop was not then aware of the younger brother, Charles, being alive in the West Indies.



now in the possession of the writer, was drawn up by Dr. Thomas Campbell, a native of Glack in the county of Tyrone, Rector of Killisheill, Chancellor of St. Macartin's, Clogher, and author of "A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland," and "Strictures on the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Ireland."\* To this outline, for it was merely such, when completed, the Bishop added notes on the blank sides of the pages, which were afterward incorporated into the text, under his direction, by the Rev. Henry Boyd, his chaplain, the translator of Dante; and the MS., when placed in the hands of the publishers, between whom and that Prelate an angry disagreement occurred toward the conclusion of their negotiation, received further additions from Mr. Samuel Rose, the friend of Cowper, with which however the Bishop and Malone, as appears by their correspondence now before the writer, were displeased. The memoranda of so many persons, at various times, disjointed in themselves, and thrown together with little regard to method, aimed at no detail, and claimed therefore only the merit of a sketch. No serious attempt was made, when it might have been made with effect from the remembrance of surviving acquaintance, to trace minutely Goldsmith's adventures on the continent of Europe, his early, or indeed later life, in London, or the miscellaneous writings known to have employed his pen in the necessary business of supplying daily wants. Even much of the information which had been communicated to the Bishop

\* In a letter to Bishop Percy, Sept. 5. 1790, Dr. Campbell says,—“As to Goldsmith of which you inquire, and concerning which Maurice Goldsmith has been inquiring, it is in such a state that I think I could finish the remainder *currente prelo*.” August 13. 1791—“I cannot bend my sails for England before November. Then I shall take with me all the documents respecting Goldsmith.” February 3. 1792, he asks the Bishop why he may not print off the first sheets, and send the proofs to him at Bath. June 12. 1793—“I am glad to hear that you have brought the affair of Goldsmith to so good an issue—but alas! poor Maurice. He is to receive no comfort from your Lordship's labours in his behalf. He departed from a miserable life early last winter, and luckily has left no children.”

was not used, being forgotten or mislaid in the long interval between the first design of publishing in 1785, and its accomplishment in 1801. During this time the subject was frequently agitated in the correspondence of Dr. Percy with Malone, and the latter took much trouble in making arrangements for publication with the booksellers in London.\* Still the design lingered; and without casting the slightest reflection where the motives were so praiseworthy, it is too frequently thus with projects merely charitable where some strong personal interest is not present to push us actively forward in their promotion. On this occasion, from the nature of the work, neither fame nor emolument was sought; and without one or the other in view, little of value was ever achieved in literature.

The present attempt to rescue from oblivion scattered memorials of the life and productions of this popular Author, owes its origin to the persuasions of an ingenious Clerical friend. The writer having had the honour of being elected into the Royal Irish Academy during a residence in his native country in 1830, was desirous of contributing to its Transactions a paper on Goldsmith, derived from some critical remarks made on his writings many years before, and enlarged by such additions in matters of fact as inquiry in Ireland might afford. With this view he wrote to the friend in question,† who is himself a poet, a native of the town nearly adjoining the place of Goldsmith's birth, one of his most ardent admirers, who had endeavoured, though without success, to acquire more extended in-

\* The late Mr. Murray of Fleet-street was first selected for publisher of Goldsmith's Works, but he died during the negociation. A few letters of Malone to Bishop Percy, still extant, state the circumstances.

† Rev. John Graham, Rector of Tamlaghtard in the diocese of Londonderry, author of *Annals of Ireland*, *Poems*, *History of the Siege of Londonderry*, &c. &c. In 1822, this gentleman attempted to assemble the gentry of Westmeath and Longford, at a public dinner in Ballymahon, with the view of commencing a subscription for a column to the memory of the Poet; few, however, attended; and this patriotic design failed. Sir Walter Scott offered his contribution.

formation of his earlier life, and who also, by means of a public subscription, attempted in vain to raise a column to his memory on the spot where he was born. This gentleman strongly urged the author of these pages to give, what he said was so much wanted, a Life ; he had made the same proposition to him three years before (1827), which was at once declined ; a refusal was again given on its repetition ; but a renewal of these friendly persuasions, arising from a very flattering opinion of his diligence, at last induced the writer seriously to think of attempting what might possibly please others, though it might fail to satisfy himself.

The great difficulty was to procure such information as might be new and satisfactory. Of all the distinguished writers of so recent a date, his life, or at least a large portion of it, considering that it offered some curious vicissitudes, was the least accurately known. Not a new fact on the subject, and scarcely one connected with his productions, had transpired for thirty years ; no one was known to possess any of his remains ; and in the innumerable biographies of literary men and others, published since his death, there was not, with one exception, even a letter of Goldsmith to be found. Material as these obstacles appeared, the design when once determined upon was pursued, it is hoped, with becoming spirit. A journey was undertaken to his native spot ; to the subsequent residence of his father at Lissoy ; to Athlone ; and to Roscommon and its vicinity, where the Poet had spent some time in the house of one of his uncles ; communications were entered into with his relatives who were supposed to be capable of communicating information ; indeed, all who could be traced were applied to on the subject ; and the records of Trinity College searched for such facts as they could supply. With the same view, application was made by the writer to all his literary acquaintance, and removing to London in the following year (1831), he

had the advantage of pursuing there the research that would have proved unavailing elsewhere. In proof that no reasonable diligence was wanting to the completion of an object which he considered more national (to Ireland) than personal, it may be mentioned that several hundreds of letters have been written in furtherance of his inquiries, and personal applications nearly as numerous made to others; while many of the periodical works, and several of the daily journals for a period of fifteen years, have been carefully examined by himself, to ascertain the exact dates of the Poet's productions, to trace such others from the same publishers as he did not avow, and to glean all the miscellaneous intelligence they might afford. Much of this was done amid occupations of a public nature, and necessarily cost much time and laborious inquiry. The result, however, has been a large, and it is hoped accurate, accession of information.

One of the obvious duties of a biographer was to discover and to collect, as fully as possible, the scattered productions of his principal; to do that for an admired writer which premature death prevented him doing for himself. The previous attempt to accomplish this object can scarcely be considered serious; no information was given of the principle adopted in the selection, the place whence selected, or the certainty of the pieces so chosen being authentic; it appeared without the sanction of any name; and was not, in fact, as has been stated, the work of any one individual who could be considered accountable for its imperfections. Thus the *Threnodia* and *Oratorio* in poetry, and one of the introductions to *Natural History* in prose, though known to Bishop Percy as his, are not even alluded to in the memoir; while some which are mentioned, though of undoubted merit, such as the *Letters of a Nobleman to His Son*, have not the preface and introductory matter included, as in other instances, in the

four volumes then published; the effect of the unconnected manner in which that collection was prepared for the press. A new edition of his Works has therefore become necessary; it will include many pieces that were not known to be Goldsmith's until the present writer pursued his researches, and others which the former editor carelessly omitted. This edition, comprised in four volumes, will immediately succeed the present publication.

Very little consideration made it apparent to the Editor, that Goldsmith must have written much which he had not thought proper to acknowledge; but to discover the nature of these labours, few of which from such a hand were likely to be worthless, he was thrown chiefly upon his own resources. Some traditional notices, derived circuitously from his contemporaries, and one or two advertisements in the newspapers shortly after his death, were in the first instance the chief guides; to these much contemporary reading and minute inquiries, added others. The task of investigation proved toilsome and protracted. But a familiar acquaintance with his admitted writings, the habit of comparing them with pieces in periodical works to which he contributed, and with volumes issuing from booksellers by whom he was employed; coincidences of sentiment, repetitions of the same ideas or phraseology, in addition to general resemblance of style, afforded facilities for tracking him with considerable success. Occasionally the writer could satisfy himself by such means, when perhaps he might have been unable to carry similar conviction to the minds of others. But it was not a little satisfactory to find, that the judgment he had passed upon the authenticity of several detached papers from internal evidence only, was confirmed after the lapse of a few years by the discovery of positive testimonies to their authorship. In this manner, many of the productions written for Mr. John Newbery,



one of his earlier and active friends, have been placed beyond doubt: these were not all of equal value, and some have not been retained; but it is satisfactory at least to know how and by whom, he was at particular intervals employed.

Among those to whom the Editor's thanks are due for various communications and attentions during the progress of the work, are the Lord Bishop of Cork, who took the trouble to examine with him the records of Trinity College, Dublin; and the Rev. Dr. Lloyd, the present Provost, and the Rev. Dr. Sadleir, the Librarian, who gave him access to the public documents of that university. He is obliged likewise to the Honourable Judge Day, now retired from the Irish Bench, for a few recollections of his acquaintance with Goldsmith; to the Rev. Dr. Handcock of Dublin, for copies of two original letters; to William R. Mason, Esq., for the perusal of an extensive manuscript correspondence of Dr. Percy, the Bishop of Dromore; to Dr. Neligan, grand nephew of the Poet, and the Rev. Dr. Streat, of Athlone; to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., nephew of the author of *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, for the perusal of letters of the Rev. Thomas Handcock addressed to his uncle respecting the Goldsmith family; to William Crawford, Esq., for two letters of Burke and his college friends bearing upon the subject; to Sir William Betham, Joseph Abbott, Esq., George Kiernan, Esq., and the late lamented Matthew Weld Hartstonge, Esq. for many, and on account of the great difficulty of procuring information, often troublesome, inquiries.

In England he found equal zeal expressed to forward an object which was no sooner mentioned than it excited a lively interest. His obligations are particularly due to Thomas Amyot, Esq., Treasurer of the Antiquarian Society, whose love of letters is only exceeded by a dis-

position active and friendly in assisting all who are engaged in the pursuit; through him the use of several pieces was procured from the library of the late Mr. Heber. He is likewise much indebted to William Newbery, Esq., for various documents connected with Goldsmith's earlier literary labours for his grandfather, and curious memorials of his life; to Major-General Sir Henry Bunbury, Bart., for copies of verses addressed to his family; to a Lady, his near relative, for her recollections of the Poet; to Dr. H. U. Thomson of Piccadilly, for the use of several letters of Bishop Percy addressed to Malone; to William Nicol, Esq., of Pall Mall, William Upcott, Esq., H. W. Singer, Esq.; and to several others whose names will be found annexed to the information which they had the kindness to communicate.



**CONTENTS**  
  
OF  
  
**THE FIRST VOLUME.**

---

**CHAPTER I.**

The Goldsmith Family.—Pallas.—Birth of the Poet.— Lissoy.—Schools and early Instructors.—Edgworth's Town - - - - -	Page 1
--	--------

**CHAPTER II.**

Adventure at Ardagh.—Rev. Mr. Contarine.—Entry into Trinity College, Dublin.—Letter of the Rev. Dr. Wilson. —His Tutor.—Ballad Writing - - -	44
--	----

**CHAPTER III.**

Riot of the Students.—Sentence upon Goldsmith and others.—Absents himself from the University.—Anec- dotes.—Takes the Degree of B.A.—His Father	76
---	----

**CHAPTER IV.**

Declines to take Orders.—Ballymahon.—Accepts a Tutor- ship.—Travels to Cork.—Reputed Poetical Attempts.— Adopts the Profession of Physic.—Edinburgh.—Mr. Lachlan Macleane - - - - -	109
--	-----

**CHAPTER V.**

Quits Edinburgh.—Letter from Leyden.—Anecdotes.— Journey on the Continent - - - - -	158
--	-----

## CHAPTER VI.

Arrival in England.—Early Struggles in London.—Be- comes Usher in the School of Dr. Milner at Peckham. —Engages in the Monthly Review.—Dr. James Grainger	- - - -	Page 200
--	---------	----------

## CHAPTER VII.

Visit of his Brother to London.—Letter to Mr. Hodson.— Memoirs of a Protestant.—Grand Magazine.—Letters to Mr. Mills, to Mr. Bryanton, and to Mrs. Jane Lawder. —Appointment to India.—Letter to Mr. Hodson.— Attempts to pass Surgeons' Hall	- - - -	244
---	---------	-----

## CHAPTER VIII.

Quarrel with Mr. Griffiths, and Letter to him.—Kenrick. —Letter to Rev. Henry Goldsmith.—Voltaire's Life.— Edward Purdon.—Enquiry into Polite Learning.— Connexion with the Critical Review	- - - -	283
--	---------	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

Residence in Green-Arbour Court.—The Bee.—Busy Body. —Lady's Magazine.—Newbery the Bookseller.—Notes of Dr. Johnson.—Smollett.—British Magazine		323
---	--	-----

## CHAPTER X.

Public Ledger.—Chinese Letters.—Lady's Magazine.— Removes to Wine-Office Court.—Dr. Johnson.—Gar- rick.—Introduction to History of the War.—Project for visiting Asia	- - - -	355
--	---------	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

Various Literary Engagements.—Pamphlet on the Cock Lane Ghost.—History of Mecklenburgh.—Art of Poetry. —Plutarch.—Citizen of the World.—Additions to a History of England.—Life of Beau Nash.—Lines sup- posed to be written at Orpington.—Christian's Maga- zine.—Robin Hood Society.—Peter Annet.—Lloyd.— Roubiliac	- - - -	387
---	---------	-----

CHAPTER XII.

<u>Boswell.—Residence of Goldsmith at Islington, and Con-</u>	
<u>nection with Newbery - - -</u>	<u>Page 427</u>

CHAPTER XIII.

<u>Literary Projects.—Brookes's Natural History.—Martial</u>	
<u>Review.—Literary Club.—Prefaces and Translations.—</u>	
<u>Letters from a Nobleman to his Son - - -</u>	<u>464</u>

**DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.**

**Goldsmith's Monument in Westminster Abbey.**

*To face Titlepage of Vol. I.*

**Fac Simile of Goldsmith's Handwriting.**

*To face Titlepage of Vol. II.*

L I F E  
OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

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CHAPTER I.

THE GOLDSMITH FAMILY.—PALLAS.—BIRTH OF THE POET.—  
LISBOY.—SCHOOLS AND EARLY INSTRUCTORS.—EDGORTH'S  
TOWN.

THE family of Goldsmith, Goldsmyth, or, as it was occasionally written, Gouldsmith, is of considerable standing in Ireland, and seems always to have held a respectable station in society. Its origin is English, supposed to be derived from that which was long settled at Crayford, in Kent: in Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, we find some of its members not unknown to literature, and a similarity in the coats of arms appears to confirm this belief. No clear detail of pedigree has been preserved by the Irish branch, willing, as it would seem, even in a country where antient family sometimes assumes the place of more solid distinctions, to rest their claim to antiquity chiefly on tradition.

One of the earliest settlers in Ireland whose

name appears in public documents, was John Goldsmith, who held the office of searcher in the port of Galway, in 1541. His appointment to an office of greater importance, apparently by the request of his superiors, is thus intimated in a king's letter, dated 5th March, 34th of Henry VIII. (1542):—

“We be pleased that John Goldsmyth shall have the roome of the Clerk of our Counsaill, according to your suits and deasires.”

Tradition reports that a female descendant of this gentleman married a Spaniard, named Juan Romeiro, who, travelling in Ireland as the companion of a nobleman of that nation, became enamoured of her, and marrying, settled in the country. His descendants, retaining their mother's name, fixed their abode in the province of Connaught and on its borders, particularly in the counties of Roscommon, Westmeath, and Longford, where something more than a century ago many traces of the Goldsmiths existed, which are now swept away. With the maternal name, they likewise preserved her religious faith; one or more of the members have been usually brought up to the church, whence it has been designated a clerical family; and one of these, the Rev. John Goldsmith, rector of Borrishoule, in the county of Mayo, narrowly escaped the effects of the savage animosity engendered against the thinly scattered Protestant population at the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1641.

From his statement upon oath before the parliamentary commissioners, it appears that, in the



consternation produced by the massacres of their brethren in the vicinity of Castlebar, the survivors, to the number of sixty, including Sir Henry Bingham, the Bishop of Killala, and fifteen clergymen, became anxious for safe conduct to the town of Galway, which was promised by the "lord of Mayo," Viscount Bourke, a Roman Catholic. Accompanied by the titular archbishop, he conveyed them as far as Shrute: here they were handed over to one Edmond, or Captain, Bourke, a relative of the peer; but the latter had no sooner departed than a general massacre commenced by order of their conductor. Few of the unfortunate men escaped; but among these was Mr. Goldsmith, who, being esteemed by the Viscount, had just before been detached, no doubt for the purpose of saving his life, to attend upon the Viscountess, a Protestant; and by this means was saved from the melancholy fate which awaited many others.\*

A son, as is said, of this gentleman, probably in compensation for the losses of his father, or for previous services of his own, secured after the Restoration a grant originally assigned to him before the civil war, in the following terms:—"George Goldsmith, and Hester his wife, and their heirs, such right in law and equity in Kilbegg and Brackughreagh, lands situate in the Barony of

\* History of the Irish Rebellion, by Sir John Temple, 4to. 1698, p. 107.



Moycashell, county of Westmeath, as was decreed to them 4th August, 1633."

Edward, the son of the latter, was educated in Trinity College\*, Dublin, and taking holy orders, became Dean of Elphin in July 1700, with the vicarages of Ardcarne, Eastersnow, and Kilmactrany, and died in 1722. His son, the Rev. Isaac Goldsmith†, also educated at Trinity College, was promoted to the Deanery of Cloyne in 1736, to which, from its poverty (for deaneries in Ireland by no means imply wealth,) was added the small prebends of Kilmally and Lescleary. He died in 1769.

Another son of the Rector of Borrishoule, named John, educated for the church, believed to have been at one time a fellow of Trinity College, and who afterwards enjoyed the living of Newtown, in the county of Meath, married Jane, only daughter of Robert Madden, of Dunore, in the county of Dublin, Esq., by whom he had issue, Robert, John, and Jane. John is believed to have died unmarried; Jane married first Robert Woods, of Lakon, in the county of Sligo, and secondly, Edward Muns, of Ussy, in the county of

\* The following entry is from the College Register:—"1677, Junii decimo quinto—*Edwardus Goldsmith pensionarius—filius Georgii Goldsmith annos quindecim—natus ( ) Educatus sub ferula ( )—Tutor Nat. Fay.*"

† 1720, Julii die secundo—*Isaacus Goldsmith pensionarius—Filius Edwardi Decani Elphin—Annum agens decimum quartum—Natus Elfin—Educatus Carrick sub Magistro Manby—Tutor Magister Hamilton.*"

Roscommon, by whom she had issue, Edward and Jane.

Robert, the elder son and grandfather to the poet, who seems to have exercised no profession, married Catherine, daughter of Thomas Crofton, D.D., dean of Elphin, and settled at Ballyoughter, near the residence of his father-in-law; and Dr. Edward Goldsmith, his relative already mentioned, being afterwards promoted to the same deanery, the branches of the family were thus brought together. By this lady, who enjoyed a moderate fortune, he had a family of thirteen children, nine sons and four daughters. Of this numerous progeny, which through mistake of his early biographers was given to the father instead of the grandfather of the poet, several died young; John, the elder, who had been educated at Trinity College\* preparatory to studying for the bar, afterwards relinquishing thoughts of that profession, settled on the family property at Ballyoughter where Oliver once was an inmate, and where his talents were first supposed to be discerned.

Such is the account of the more remote connections of Goldsmith, derived from various sources† after considerable research; but where the individual has interested us, the illustration of family

\* “ 1697, Sep. 23°. *Johannes Goldsmith Pensio* : — *Filius Roberti Goldsmith generosi*—*Annum agens 18*—*Natus villa dic a Ballioughter Com : Roscommon*—*Educatus Stroakstown sub Mag°. Cugh*—*Tutor Eu : Loyd.*”

† For several particulars, I am indebted to the kindness of my friend Sir William Betham, Ulster King of Arms.

history becomes a matter of reasonable curiosity. He himself was accustomed to say that by the female side he was remotely connected with the family of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell, from whom his christian name was derived. By the father's side he claimed affinity with General Wolfe, the conqueror of Quebec, whose mother, Henrietta Goldsmith, as well as her husband, it would appear from some circumstances, were natives of Ireland.\*

Charles, the second son of Robert, and father of the Poet, brought up to the sacred profession, passed through Trinity College with credit†, and is said by his son to have had, as well as his uncle John, some knowledge of the poet Parnell.‡ To the

\* In the obituaries of the time, this lady is mentioned as aunt to Edward Goldsmith, Esq., of Limerick, a promising young man, who died in 1764. Of the regard of this lady for the true interests of Ireland, the following is a proof: "On Friday, the executors of the late Mrs. Henrietta Wolfe, mother of the late brave General Wolfe, paid the legacy of 1000*l.* left by her to the Incorporated Society in Dublin, for promoting English Working Schools in Ireland." *Lloyd's Evening Post*, May, 27—29, 1765.

In an Irish obituary for 1771 is mentioned the death of Major Walter Wolfe, uncle to the General, who had served under Marlborough, and to whose early and judicious instructions, it is said, his nephew was indebted for much of his knowledge of the art of war.

† "1707, *Carolus Goldsmith Pens.—Filius Rob :—Ann : ag : 17—Natus prope Elphin—Educ : ibid. sub D<sup>no</sup>. Griffith—Tutor Joh. Weatherby.*"

‡ "1692, 25<sup>o</sup>. die Novembris—*Thomas Parnell Pensionarius—Filius Thomæ Parnell Armigeri—Annum agens decimum tertium—Natus Dublinii—Educatus ibidem sub Magistro Jones—Tutor Eu. Lloyd.*"

former this acquaintance may have occurred at a later period, or by College tradition, for they were not contemporaries : but his uncle John was there for a portion of the same time and under the same tutor. His father, it likewise appears, enjoyed the acquaintance of Thomas, grandfather of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who was of the same standing in the University, having entered it the 18th October, 1707.

The Rev. Charles Goldsmith is represented to have first filled a curacy in the diocese of Dublin, and afterwards of a place of which there is no satisfactory account, probably from an error in orthography, but supposed Dusham or Duneham. These appear to have been but temporary employments, for he was without occupation, when, in 1718, he married Ann, daughter of the Rev. Oliver Jones, master of the diocesan school at Elphin, where he had received his preliminary education, and where the attachment commenced. This union was not approved of by the friends of either ; he was destitute of the means of providing for a family, and the father of his wife having a son and three other daughters to provide for, her portion was small. As some support however became necessary for the young couple, the Rev. Mr. Green, uncle to Mrs. Goldsmith and rector of the parish of Kilkenny West, provided them a house about six miles distant from himself, at a place called Pallas, in the adjoining county of Long-

ford. Here they took up their abode, and continued for a period of twelve years ; Mr. Goldsmith officiating partly in the church of his uncle, and partly in that of the parish in which he resided.

In the more remote districts of Ireland, the necessities of life being cheap, come within reach of a small income ; homeliness was then and is occasionally now characteristic of the country ; what are called the comforts of life in England, were not in the sister kingdom sought by many who possessed nevertheless the means of procuring them ; and to this early familiarity with what many would consider privation, may be ascribed that indifference to it remarked of the Poet in future life. Mr. Charles Goldsmith, besides the emoluments of his profession and the contributions of his friends, supported an increasing family, by renting some land in the vicinity upon which his leisure hours were employed. His first permanent support appears to have been a gift from his mother-in-law of fifty acres of land, procured at a nominal rent by the exertion of that address which an Irish tenant sometimes plays off upon a necessitous landlord ; and the story is still told by her descendants. The heading of one of the leases is still in existence, of the date July 30th, 1729, between William Conolly, Esq., one of the Lords Justices, &c. &c. and Ann Jones, &c. runs thus :—"To have and to hold —, in and during the natural lives of — and Ann Goldsmith, wife of the Rev. Charles Goldsmith of Pallacemore, in the county of Longford, clerk, one

of the daughters of the said Ann Jones," &c. &c.\*

Pallas, or Pallasmore, that is the greater or higher Pallas, in the parish of Forgany or Forney, in the county of Longford, consists of an ordinary farm-house or two ; and in a direct line, is about a mile and half from the town of Ballymahon, though by the road, which is circuitous, double that distance. It lies to the south-east of Newcastle, a seat of the Countess Dowager of Rosse, and being on a rising ground, overlooks on one side a low tract of country occasionally flooded by the river Inny ; a stream

\* The activity and spirit displayed by this lady on the occasion of procuring the lease are thus mentioned by Mr. Jones Lloyd, proprietor of Smithhill, or Ardnagowan, her great grandson :

" The Rev. Oliver Jones had rented a considerable tract of land from Mr. Conolly, one of the lords justices of the kingdom, which at the death of the former fell out of lease, and the widow was told she could not have a renewal. Not dispirited by this intimation she determined to try her personal influence, and undertook, what was then thought an unusual effort for a woman, a journey to Dublin. No public conveyance existed ; the roads were in a most wretched state ; but, mounting a pillion behind her son on horseback, proceeded in this manner to the metropolis. The whole of the lands were refused to her application ; but having, as a final argument, judiciously provided herself with one hundred guineas, she once more urged her suit to the landlord, and in addition to her solicitations displayed the gold before him. This had its due effect ; necessity has ever been master in Ireland ; and the temptation was sufficient to procure a fresh lease of *half* the lands on the same easy terms as before. She used jocularly to regret that she had not taken another hundred with her, and thus secured the whole. The journey, however, in consequence of a hurt, cost her the life of her son."



which in passing Ballymahon in its course to the Shannon, assumes a very picturesque appearance. The road to Pallas leads past Forney church : here it turns to the left, and after proceeding more than a mile, takes a second abrupt turn also to the left by a lane, which if the traveller have resolution to traverse will lead to the object of his pursuit. This place was visited on a fine day in December ; but rocky inequalities of the lane in some parts and deep sloughs in others, rendered it inaccessible to the usual conveyance, a jaunting car ; even the common rough country cars find a portion of it difficult, and the remainder defies any wheeled vehicle whatever. The route to the house was therefore pursued on foot ; and after a fatiguing walk through fields and over hedges, the spot was at length reached, but it is feared with many poetical associations subdued by the uncivilised nature of the approach.

At Pallas OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born, on the 10th of November, 1728 ; the house however in which it took place has been long levelled to the ground by the present occupier of the farm, a squalid-looking though it is said opulent person for his class, we were informed that little more than its foundation remained when he first became tenant, about forty years before ; and as may be supposed, even that is now obliterated. He pointed out a portion of its wall overgrown with grass, forming a part of the fence of the orchard. To several questions he replied, that it had been, as he was told, a “ good

country house," the front looking toward Forney church ; and he had heard that Oliver Goldsmith, the poet, was born in the best bed-room, which looked in the same direction. These details were confirmed by others. Afterwards it would appear this house became the residence of a branch of the Edgeworth family\*, whose property the land still continues. Few persons now visit it from curiosity, partly from being little known, partly from the difficulties of the road ; for to ladies and delicate or infirm persons it is nearly inaccessible ; only one gentleman, as the farmer said, had ventured to explore it the preceding summer. The attention of literary pilgrims has been rather directed to Lissoy on the high road to Athlone, which became the subsequent residence of Mr. Goldsmith, and offered no difficulties of approach.

An amusing tradition respecting this house was repeated to us by a neighbouring magistrate. When from neglect and want of an occupier the roof first fell in, attempts made to repair it were continually thwarted by the hostility of an ill-looking (for the peasantry are minute in their descriptions on such occasions), powerful, supernatural personage accoutred in huge boots, who amused himself nightly in bestriding the roof as he would a horse, and by mimicking the motion of riding, pushed his legs through it and sometimes through the

\* In an Irish Magazine (Exshaw's, for 1770) there is the following announcement of birth :—" The wife of Francis White Edgeworth, Esq., of *Pallasmore, Co. of Longford*, of a son."



upper floor, thus rendering all attempts at reparation unavailing. The reason assigned for these pranks was as fanciful as the story. Being on a rising ground, in a retired part of the country and in the vicinity of water, it was favourable for the resort of the "good people," or Fairies, during their midnight sports, who if the house became habitable would have had their privacy broken in upon ; these means were therefore taken by this feared though imaginary race of beings to keep off intruders. It is perhaps in the natural order of things, that the spot where an admired poet first drew breath, should be the scene of popular fiction.

The place of his birth, notwithstanding the statement of his nearest relatives, is still disputed with considerable heat in the different districts which claim it ; and the province of Connaught particularly deems her honour concerned in the struggle. The rival counties are Leitrim, Roscommon, Westmeath, and Longford ; rather more than half the number of places which contended for the honour of having the father of poetry one of their fellow-citizens —

*Septem urbes certant de stirpe insignis Homeri,  
Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, Athenæ.*

The claim of Leitrim has never been esteemed valid ; it is confined to the towns of Drumsna and Carrick-on-Shannon, where Goldsmith had relatives residing and which he occasionally visited in early life. That of Westmeath is equally objectionable,

being merely entered in the admission book of Trinity College as the then residence of his father. Ardnagan, Ardnagowan, or in correct Celtic orthography as it is said \* *Airdnagabha*, near Elphin, the abode of his grandfather Jones, contests the matter more vigorously ; and here, were his early biographers to be trusted, we should assign his birth. Mr. Jones Lloyd, its present possessor, descended from another daughter of the Rev. Mr. Jones, points out from the information of his grandmother, the room and even the precise part of the room, where the Poet by this account first saw the light. At present this apartment forms the dairy, though at that time one of the principal in a house second only to that of the bishop of the diocese, and since considerably enlarged ; and the confinement of Mrs. Goldsmith is stated to have occurred unexpectedly during a visit to her mother. No corroboration can be obtained of this story : the relater of it being about the same age as the Poet, could not herself be acquainted with the fact, while stronger testimony elsewhere satisfactorily disproves her statement. But as eminence commonly begets admirers, and singularity is supposed to attend uncommon events, it was necessary perhaps to make the Poet peculiar even in his birth ; and unlike the other children of the family, have his nativity assigned not to the house of his father, but to another which gratified a little family pride by being of more importance.

\* By the Rev. Dr. Streaton of Athlone, to whom I feel obliged for the inquiries he has made.

A document has been lately recovered which sets the matter at rest. This is the leaf of the family Bible in which the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Goldsmith and the births of their children are recorded, now in the possession of Dr. Neligan of Athlone, great grand-nephew of the poet, from which the following transcript was made by his permission during a visit to that town in 1830. The marginal portion of the leaf being unluckily worn away by age, the two last figures of the century in which Henry, Jane, and Oliver were born are thus lost; the age of the Poet is, however, sufficiently ascertained by the recollection of his sister, and by calling himself when writing from London, in 1759, thirty-one. The year of his birth is therefore 1728.

“ Charles Goldsmith of Ballyoughter was married to Mrs. Ann Jones y<sup>e</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1718.

“ Margaret Goldsmith was born at Pallismore in the county of Longford y<sup>e</sup> 22<sup>d</sup> August 1719.

“ Catherine Goldsmith born at Pallas y<sup>e</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> January 1721.

“ Henry Goldsmith was born at Pallas Feb<sup>ry</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 17 .

“ Jane Goldsmith was born at Pallas Feb<sup>ry</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 17 .

“ Oliver Goldsmith was born at Pallas November y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> 17 .

“ Maurice Goldsmith was born at Lissoy in y<sup>e</sup> county Westmeath y<sup>e</sup> seventh of July 1736.

“ Charles Goldsmith jun<sup>r</sup> born at Lishoy Aug<sup>t</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> 1737.

“John Goldsmith born at Lishoy\* y<sup>e</sup> 23<sup>d</sup> of (month obliterated) 1740.

This paper corrects some errors into which Mrs. Hodson, elder sister of the Poet, from trusting to memory, had fallen, in the account of her brother furnished to Bishop Percy. His birthday is there stated to be the 29th of November, instead of the date here assigned : Henry is also said to be eight years his senior,—an error probably repeated from seeing it in one of the Poet’s letters, though the interval could not have been more than six years, if so much ; and a space of eight years, stated to have occurred between the birth of the previous child and Oliver, really took place between the latter and the succeeding son, Maurice.

About the year 1730, Mr. Goldsmith, by the death of his wife’s uncle, succeeded to the Rectory of Kilkenny West. He removed at the same time to Lissoy, a respectable house and farm on the verge of a small village standing in his own parish, on the right of the road leading from Ballymahon to Athlone, and about midway between these towns. It was neither a glebe house, nor did he, as it is sometimes said, build it ; but the

\* The reader will observe many variations in orthography ; thus Lissoy or Lishoy are used as the whim of the moment prompts ; thus also we have Pallas, Pallasmore, Pallismore, and Pallacemore, all meaning the same place ; and the family of Hodson near Athlone, into which the Poet’s sister Catherine married, is now by their own relatives called or spelt Hodson or Hudson indiscriminately ; the latter indeed most commonly. Few things perplex an inquirer in Ireland more than these needless and arbitrary variations.

lively interest which this spot has excited, as well in his native country as wherever the "Deserted Village" is read, as the supposed scene pourtrayed in the poem, added to the numerous inquiries made even in Ireland whether such a village as Auburn exists, or was really deserted, make some further notice of this spot necessary.

Lissoy, in that scarce volume giving an account of the forfeited estates in Ireland, would appear to have been a species of personal property of James II. It was sold, or at least such portion of it as he claimed, amounting to 121 acres, in 1708, to Captain Richard Newstead of Westmeath, for 421*l.*, the annual rent of the then tenant in possession, Robert Temple, Esq., being 29*l.*; it is described as consisting of arable and pasture land, with the further recommendation of having a "good sheep-walk." Soon after the removal of Mr. Goldsmith thither, he procured a lease from the purchaser (Newstead) of about 70 acres of this land, at the rent of eight shillings an acre, renewable for ever on the payment of half a year's rent for every new life introduced, the first lives being those of himself, his eldest son Henry, and daughter Catherine, afterwards Mrs. Hodson. \* This property

\* An abstract of this deed, dated January 28th, 1731, may be seen in the Register Office, Dublin; also a second, dated September 1742, fixing the sum of 26*l.* as the annual rent of the lands in question, to prevent dispute respecting the amount of rent, the lease having specified certain boundaries, rather than the precise number of acres.

remained in the family till 1802, when it was sold by Mr. Henry Goldsmith, then in America, son of the above-named Henry the clergyman, and of whom an account will afterwards appear, to Mr. Bond, a connection of the family by marriage, in whose possession it remains.

The identity of Lissoy with the scene of the poem, in the general belief of the people of the vicinity, is corroborated by an anecdote told by a traveller some years ago in the United States.

“ ‘The Deserted Village,’ said he (Mr. Best, an Irish clergyman, is the speaker), relates to the scenes in which Goldsmith was an actor. Auburn is a poetical name for the village of Lissoy in the county of Westmeath, barony of Kilkenny West. The name of the schoolmaster was Paddy Burns. I remember him well. He was, indeed, a man severe to view. A woman called Walsey Cruse kept the alehouse—

‘Imagination fondly stoops to trace  
The parlour splendours of that festive place.’

I have been often in the house. The hawthorn-bush was remarkably large, and stood opposite the alehouse. I was once riding with Brady, titular Bishop of Ardagh, when he observed to me, ‘Ma foy\*, Best, this huge overgrown bush is mightily in the way; I will order it to be cut down.’ ‘What, sir!’ said I, ‘cut down Goldsmith’s hawthorn-bush,

\* The Irish Roman Catholic Clergy were then all educated in France, and in language and manners were often more French than Irish.



that supplies so beautiful an image in the Deserted Vilage !' 'Ma foy !' exclaimed the Bishop, 'is that the hawthorn-bush ? Then ever let it be sacred from the edge of the axe, and evil to him that would cut from it a branch !' \*

An anecdote connected with this subject, and of which further notice will occur, requires to be mentioned here. In November, 1738, a part of the townland of Lissoy, and the adjoining lands of Cannorstown to the number of 600 acres, were sold by "Jeffrey French, Esq. of the Middle Temple," to the "Honourable Robert Naper, lieutenant-general of his Majesty's forces in Ireland," for the sum of 3,800*l* ; but the General appears to have died before the purchase was completed. Upon this property, named Ballybegg, lying behind the house of Mr. Goldsmith, about half a mile distant, Mr. Wm. Naper, son of the General, several years afterwards built the family residence, named Littleton. In the preliminary arrangements, some circumstances probably neither harsh nor unjust in themselves, connected with the removal of part of the tenantry, gave rise in the mind of Goldsmith, morbidly acute in his benevolent feelings and particularly towards the poorer classes of society, to the idea of the "Deserted Village." Proprietary rights cannot always be exercised by landlords in Ireland, even in a reasonable manner, without extreme jealousy on the part of the people. Circumstances therefore which

\* Davis's travels in the United States of America, p. 113.

occur daily in England, and produce neither censure nor notice, excite in the former loud complaint, if not open hostility. Anything resembling severity becomes speedily known and loudly censured; and such impressions, however untrue, taken up and acted upon by the imagination and eloquence of a poet, are dangerous assailants of reputation. An attack in simple prose may be answered, and seldom long survives the period of contention; but embalmed in verse, the supposed misdeeds of an offender may endure as long as the language.\*

The house once occupied by the Rector of Kilkenny West, pleasantly situated and of good dimensions, is now a ruin, verifying the truth of the pathetic lines of his son—

“Vain transitory splendours ! Could not all  
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall !”

The front, including a wing, extends, as nearly as could be judged by pacing it, sixty-eight feet by a depth of twenty-four; it consisted of two stories, with five windows in each. The roof has been off for a period of twenty years; the gable ends remain, but the front and back walls of the upper story have crumbled away, and if the hand of the destroyer be not stayed, will soon wholly dis-

\* It may amuse the political economist to know the different opinions then entertained of the influence of peace and war upon the value of landed property. In a lease, dated March 1744, from the above-named William Naper to Gerald Dillon, of 141 acres of the land around Ballybegg (adjoining Lissoy), it is stipulated, that *eight shillings* an acre rent shall be paid during the war between Great Britain and Spain, and *ten shillings* during peace.



appear. Two or three wretched cottages for labourers, surrounded by mud, adjoin it on the left. Behind the house is an orchard of some extent and the remains of a garden, both utterly neglected. In front, a pretty avenue of double rows of ash trees, which formed the approach from the high road, about sixty yards distant, and at one time presented an object of interest to travellers, has like every other trace of care, or superintendence, disappeared—cut down by the ruthless hand of some destroyer. No picture of desolation can be more complete. As if an image of the impending ruin had been present, the Poet has painted with fearful accuracy what his father's house was to be—

“ Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,  
And still where many a garden flower grows wild ;  
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,  
The Village Preacher's modest mansion rose.”

And we contemplate the realization of the melancholy scene as we do the poem of the unfortunate Falconer, who, while singing the story of one shipwreck, scarcely conceived he was fated to perish by a second.

A visitor to this spot will be tempted to believe, from the ignorance he finds among many of the neighbouring peasantry, that little enthusiasm exists regarding the name of him who nevertheless gives it all its importance. We found some unexpected instances of this. In Ireland the legend of a saint, or of a miracle, is universally familiar and never forgotten : but not so the memorials of her

distinguished men. These have too often passed away with contemporary generations. Nor are the middling and upper classes exempt from the charge of neglecting what should be their first ambition affectionately to cherish. It is not that they are indifferent to the fame of their celebrated countrymen, but we require more obvious proofs of the fact ; it is in the public statue and the column, that their professions of admiration should be brought to the test of performance.

In the homely village, standing a few hundred yards from the house, a spirit of veneration for the memory of Goldsmith has been fostered by a neighbouring gentleman\*, who has used all his influence to preserve from the ravages of time and passing depredators, such objects and localities as serve to mark allusions in the poem. Many of these are pointed out with sufficient resemblance to confirm an opinion, of which more extended notice will hereafter occur, of the Poet having this spot in view when engaged in its composition. Nothing could be more natural, in sketching rural character and scenery, than to look back on such as delighted his youth, and thence most forcibly impressed his memory.

\* John Hogan, Esq., who, succeeding to an estate in the neighbourhood, built a pretty house on the opposite side of the road, named after the scene of the poem, Auburn ; not the poem, as some seem to imagine, called after the house. This gentleman, deserves the highest praise ; and the more, perhaps, because it has not been imitated in the neighbourhood.

At Lissoy, Oliver, when about three years old, was given in charge of his first instructress: she was a relative, resident in the family, who by marriage with a neighbouring farmer became afterwards known as Elizabeth Delap, and died about 1787. In the decline of life she kept a small school in the village, and took pride in speaking to visitors of her former office. "I should have observed," writes Dr. Streat, now rector of Athlone, who was eighteen years curate of this parish, "that Elizabeth Delap, who was a parishioner of mine, and died at the age of about ninety, often told me she was the first who put a book into Goldsmith's hands; by which she meant that she had taught him his letters. She was allied to him, and kept a little school."

"Within the last three years," says the Rev. Thomas Handcock, in a letter to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., of Dublin, for whom he was making inquiries on this subject in 1790, "I was called, in the absence of a neighbouring clergyman, to visit an old woman at Lissoy (the real name of the place, Auburn), and, almost with her last breath, she boasted to me of being the first person who had put a book into Goldsmith's hands."\*

The characteristics of his mind in infancy, according to the account of Mrs. Delap, were not promising. She admitted he was one of the dumbest boys ever placed under her charge, and doubted, for

\* MS. correspondence, communicated by J. C. Walker, Esq., of Dublin, nephew to the author of "Memoirs of the Irish Bards."

some time, whether any thing could be made of him ; or, in the words used by Mr. Handcock, he seemed "impenetrably stupid." Dr. Streangleaned some remembrances to the same effect. "He was considered," says that gentleman, "by his contemporaries and schoolfellows, with whom I have often conversed on the subject, as a stupid, heavy blockhead, little better than a fool, whom every one made fun of."

To another inquirer, a Mr. Daly, who had collected some particulars of his early life, and who died in France early in the Revolution\*, her accounts were rather more favourable. She confessed he was very young at the time ; that he was docile, diffident, easily managed, and that his inaptitude for retaining his lessons might have arisen from the carelessness common to all children. Such circumstances are no otherwise worthy of notice, than merely for the gratification of curiosity ; they indicate nothing. He is a bold speculator who draws decided inferences of what the man is to be, from the casual peculiarities of the mere child.

At the age of about six years he was turned over to the care of the village schoolmaster, Thomas Byrne, a person characterised by many points of

\* Known to the late Dr. M'Veagh M'Donnell, of Orchard Street, Portman Square, a protégé of Goldsmith, of whom some account will hereafter be given. Mr. Daly communicated to that gentleman several particulars of his former patron, and believed he had discovered a few of his minor poetical pieces, of which notice will be taken in a future page.

originality, had the Poet thought fit to sketch him at length. He had been educated for the profession he now followed ; but, enlisting in the army, went with it to the Continent, and rose to be quartermaster of a regiment serving in Spain during the reign of Queen Ann. When reduced on the conclusion of the peace, he returned to his original calling of an instructor of youth. His attainments were more than sufficient for all he professed to teach, which in the want of more advanced scholars, were confined to reading, writing, and arithmetic ; and the observations on manners and character furnished by the life of a soldier, set off to advantage such knowledge as he had gleaned from books.

He is represented to have been eccentric in his habits, unsettled in disposition, of a romantic turn, wrote poetry, was well versed in the fairy superstitions of the country, and, what is not less common in Ireland, believed implicitly in their truth. He could likewise, according to the accounts of a few of his scholars who were living about 1790, given to the Rev. Mr. Handcock, “translate extemporaneously Virgil’s Eclogues into Irish verse, of, at least, equal elegance.”\* Not the least of his qualifications was the art of narrating his adventures in a manner to fix the attention and curiosity of his neighbours, and the scene of these narratives was commonly the alehouse. In the school, also, when

\* MS. Letter to the late Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq.

indisposed to teach a lesson, he would often tell a story ; and among the most eager listeners on such occasions was young Goldsmith, whose imagination appears to have been so much excited by what he heard, as to induce his friends to attribute to this cause that wandering and unsettled turn which distinguished part of his future life.

Under the tuition of Byrne he made no material progress ; a dawning of natural powers, indeed, appeared, which relatives are happy to see and proud to record ; he began to write puerile rhymes, and destroyed them as fast as they were written : but the usual school acquirements, either from defective memory or application, scarcely kept pace with those of other boys. The seeming activity of imagination exhibited by his verses made a strong impression upon his mother, who early began to believe that he was destined to make some figure in the world. His temper at this time, by the account of Mrs. Hodson, though peculiar, was kind and affectionate ; his manner, for the most part, uncommonly serious and reserved, but, when in gay humour, none more cheerful and agreeable. In these words she has described her brother as he afterwards appeared to his acquaintance in London ; solemn and yet gay, good-natured and yet irritable, petulant sometimes, and instantly appeased by the smallest concession ; so that such as did not understand, or inquire into, the occasional peculiarities of genius, were puzzled by this contrariety of dispo-



sition ; and the remark is even preserved, that he seemed to possess “two natures.”\*

One of the causes alleged for his backwardness was devoted attachment to the fictions and marvellous stories which make so much of the amusement of children in all places, and of which Ireland has a more than ordinary store. He read with avidity ; but the selection then and till a very recent period found in the village schools, cottages, and houses occupied by persons even above the class of peasantry in Ireland, was of the worst kind. His understanding or morals could derive no benefit from the perusal of such stories as the History of the Irish Rogues and Rapparees—Lives of celebrated Pirates—History of Moll Flanders—of Jack the Bachelor (a notorious Smuggler), of Fair Rosamond and Jane Shore—of Donna Rozena, the Spanish Courtesan—the Life and Adventures of James Freney, a famous Irish Robber, and others of a similar description, then the principal books of amusement for boys at school.† Whatever were their studies, a singular

\* Sir John Hawkins's Life of Dr. Johnson ; T. Davies's Life of Garrick.

† To this catalogue of what has been termed sarcastically the *Cottage Classics of Ireland*, and most of which the writer has seen in the hands of the peasantry, a friend who entered a cottage in the county of Clare, a few years ago, and transcribed on the spot a list of their books, added the following : Ovid's Art of Love—The Devil and Dr. Faustus—Parismus and Parismenus—The History of Witches and Ghosts—Montelea, Knight of the Oracle—Seven Champions of Christendom—Mendoza's Art of Boxing ; and, the only good volumes, several spelling books.

negligence existed as to their lighter stores of reading ; no apprehension seems to have been entertained of the danger likely to arise from familiarizing the minds of youth with tales of robbery and impurity ; and it is to the credit of the people, that morals have not been materially vitiated by the introduction of such improper publications into their hands.

Another favourite occupation was in listening to the ballads of the peasantry, which, as may be conceived, made so strong an impression, that he could repeat and sing several to the latest period of life. Of these, and of fairy tales and superstitions, the stock in Ireland is so abundant, or the people possess so fertile an imagination for their invention, that in the rural districts few are at a loss to furnish their share for the amusement of a winter's fire-side.\* Telling tales is to others a profession ; who travel the country in default of more steady modes of industry and find refreshment and a ready audience in farm houses to hear such wonders as they have gleaned from memory, or by invention. To these legends Goldsmith is reported to have paid anxious attention ; their effects were judged by his occasional reference in future life to fictions so wild and improbable. Such accidental circumstances are sometimes said to make poets ; they may

\* My friend Mr. Crofton Croker's volumes form admirable specimens of the ingenuity and abundance of these fictions in the south of Ireland. In the north they are scarcely less numerous, and a harvest may probably be reaped there, by such as can devote time and diligence to the pursuit.



serve perhaps to strengthen an imagination already poetical, but could they create the race, Ireland and Scotland would boast a numerous offspring.

An attack of confluent small-pox, which had nearly deprived him of life, and left traces of its ravages in his face ever after, first caused him to be taken from under the care of Byrne. And a superior master being now necessary, he was removed, on final recovery, to the same school of Elphin, in Roscommon, once superintended by his grandfather, but then under the management of the Rev. Mr. Griffin. Here he entered on a superior class of studies ; he became, likewise, an inmate of his uncle, Mr. John Goldsmith of Ballyoughter in the vicinity, and soon exhibited such evidences of talent as to be considered by that gentleman and his family a boy of the most promising kind. This opinion became strengthened from a variety of trifling incidents ; among others, by the following instances of prompt wit, which they took care should be made known to his parents : Mrs. Hodson told the one, and Mrs. Johnston, another of his sisters, related the other.

A company of young persons having assembled to dance in the house of Mr. Goldsmith, one of the party, a youth named Cumming, a proficient on the violin, was requested to play, while Oliver, who ever continued fond of the amusement of dancing, displayed his skill in a hornpipe. The effects of the late disease on his face, added to a

short and thick figure, led the musician to hold him up to youthful ridicule as the personification of *Æsop* ; and the jest proving a source of merriment, the object of it at length stopped short in the dance, and triumphantly turned the laugh against his persecutor, by pronouncing the following distich—

“ Our herald hath proclaim’d this saying,  
See *Æsop* dancing and his monkey playing.”

A retort so sharp and ready may seem above the usual capacity of a boy nine or ten years old. Something of our admiration, however, may abate, when we consider that *Æsop* probably formed one of his school books, and that some boyish verses, for they bear no proofs of a maturer age, lingering in his recollection, may have been altered to suit the purpose of the moment in gratifying juvenile resentment.

The other instance recorded of his quickness of repartee was connected with a male relative, whose imprudences had been the subject of conversation in the family. Calling at Mr. Goldsmith’s, he found Oliver in the room, and desiring him to come forward, examined his face playfully, pronouncing in a strain of banter, “ Why, Noll, you are become a fright ; when do you mean to get handsome again ? ” Annoyed by the reproach, the object of it retreated to the window without reply : when, in order to punish what was deemed a fit of sulkiness, the question was sneeringly repeated.

The boy in the meantime meditated an answer, and seizing an opportunity to escape from his persecutor, called out archly as he retreated, "I mean to get better, Sir, when you do." It may diminish our admiration of precocious wit, to know that he was at this time a year or two older than Mrs. Hodson represents.

His destination hitherto had been a mercantile life. The confined circumstances of his father and the expense to be incurred in giving the elder son, Henry, a university education, for which he was now preparing at an eminent classical school in Longford, precluded the hope of similar advantages for the second. The proofs he exhibited of superior intelligence pleaded strongly for every effort that could be made towards such an end; his mother earnestly seconded it, and his relatives promised their aid in contributing to the expense. As the first step towards it, he was sent about 1739 to a school of repute in Athlone, about five miles from his father's house, kept by the Rev. Mr. Campbell. It has been said that he exhibited no predilection or this change of destination, which was rather submitted to than sought; and in mature life, before he had attained to fame, he estimated the advantages of learning to boys generally, lower than might have been expected. "A boy," he says, writing to his brother Henry in 1759 from London, "who understands perfectly well Latin, French, arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may

qualify him for any undertaking." To the praises he received for supposed displays of early talent, as recorded in the preceding stories, the following passage in an essay on education no doubt refers :—

" Every species of flattery should be carefully avoided. A boy who happens to say a sprightly thing is generally applauded so much, that he continues a coxcomb all his life after. He is reputed a wit at fourteen, and becomes a blockhead at twenty. Nurses, footmen, and such, should therefore be driven away as much as possible. I was even going to add, that the mother herself should stifle her pleasure or her vanity, when little master happens to say a good or a smart thing."

At Athlone he continued about two years ; when the master, who bore the character of an ingenious man, resigning his charge on account of ill health, Oliver was removed to the school of the Rev. Patrick Hughes, of Edgeworthstown, in the county of Longford, where he remained till his entrance into the University. The traces of him here, as may be supposed from the lapse of time, are few. Accident must commonly contribute to the preservation of such frail memorials. The trifling events of what is considered a trifling period of life acquire importance only when the actors have risen into celebrity, and when the world becomes anxious to trace in the boy evidences of the future man,—to know how he thought, and studied, and acted ; but such information is commonly sought when it is most difficult to be procured. Many of his

school-fellows indeed were scattered in the adjoining counties, who at a future period delighted to recall anecdotes of their former companion. Among these were a Mr. Roach, a Mr. Nugent, Mr. Daly already mentioned ; the Rev. John Beatty, Vicar of Garvaghy, in the diocese of Dromore, whose entry into college took place on the same day ; and Mrs. Montgomery\*, the daughter of his master, who, though too young to remember any thing material herself, possessed opportunities of hearing something from others.

From these sources, gleaned in no connected form, or with the precision to be wished although not now to be expected, he was described as a short, thick, pale-faced, pock-marked boy, awkward in manner, backward and diffident at first, but afterwards acquiring sufficient confidence to become a leader in boyish sports, particularly in the exercise of ball-playing, or fives, in which he displayed great activity. In school he was considered indolent, though not destitute of talents ; his disposition kind and generous, as far as school-boy matters were concerned ; his temper sensitive, easily offended, though easily appeased ; and always willing to join in such juvenile tricks and scenes of humour as were going forward. The general impression seems to have been, that he exhibited

\* This lady is noticed in the *Memoirs of Richard Lovel Edgeworth*, from the mock marriage contracted by him with her when mere girl and boy, at the period he was under tuition with her father. Her reputation, however, was unspotted, and she afterwards married a clergyman.

no marked superiority to younger eyes, although well thought of by his master; and that at the period of quitting school for the university, his habits were thoughtless and boyish, and his character yet unformed.

Here, however, it is certain he made considerable advances in learning. Mr. Hughes was an acquaintance of his father; and perceiving that the disposition of the son required forbearance and encouragement rather than harshness for advancement in his studies, he conversed with him on familiar terms, and incited, not compelled, his exertions. The pupil always acknowledged the kindness he had experienced, and the advantages derived from it, but at a future period seemed to doubt whether such a system were wise in the general government of schools. He affirms, in the essay on Education\*, speaking of the acquisition of languages, that "children are only to be taught through the medium of their fears." As a general position, he is probably right; the master must make, what men of judgment and discrimination in the management of youth ever will make, the proper exceptions. The repetition of this opinion on other occasions induces the belief that he had witnessed ill effects from injudicious leniency, yet he would have been the last to practise the contrary system; nor did he, when placed in such a situation, pursue a plan which is thus recommended for the adoption of others.

\* See Works, Vol. I. Bee, No. vi.



The bent of his mind appeared to incline towards the Latin poets and historians. Ovid and Horace more especially divided his regard ; the former was his chief favourite at this time, although afterwards the latter acquired that hold he must ever possess on a matured mind. Cicero he did not highly esteem ; with Livy he was delighted ; and, in the words of Mr. Daly, in speaking of this period of his life, “ when he had once mastered the difficulties of Tacitus, he found pleasure in the perusal and occasional translation of that writer.” It is likewise said, that he exhibited “ on such occasions some attention to style, in consequence of a reproof from his elder brother, to whom having written some short and confused letters from school, he was told in reply, that “ if he had but little to say, he should endeavour to say it well.”

The reputation acquired by Henry in the University at this time was such as to give effect to his advice. He had matriculated in 1740, at a later period of life than is represented in the college register\* ; foreseeing, probably, he should be compelled, from want of the necessary interest for rising in the church, to unite the scholastic pro-

\* “ *Maii 4<sup>o</sup> 1741* (according to the University year) *Henricus Goldsmith P. ens.—Filius Caroli Clerici—Annum agens 17—Natus in Comitatu Longford :—Educatus sub ferula Ma : Nelligan—Tutor Dr. Pelissier.*” Some inaccuracy exists regarding this gentleman’s age. If only six years older than the poet, instead of seven, as asserted by Mrs. Hodson, he must have been twenty at the time of admission to college.

fession with the clerical ; and, in such cases, the candidate not unfrequently postpones till a maturer age than usual, his entrance into the university. He came necessarily well prepared, distinguished himself soon, and on Trinity Monday, 1743, was elected a scholar ; a distinction which attaches to the successful candidate through life, and enables him either to remain in college with advantage, or, should he decline to proceed for a fellowship, to quit it for any other pursuit with honour. The former would seem to have been the wish of his father ; but returning into the country in the succeeding vacation, flushed probably with his recent triumph, he indulged a youthful passion, and married ; his sister says “ at the early age of nineteen,” but he must have been three years older, or have formed this connexion previous to entering the University. To some men, and in certain favourable situations, this tie becomes a stimulus to exertion ; to others it seems a clog upon every effort at rising in life. Finding residence in college no longer eligible, the advantages of his scholarship were sacrificed : he retired, as appears from the college books, to the country ; established a school in his father’s neighbourhood ; and in this occupation, added to that of curate at “ forty pounds a year,” though possessed of talents and character, he passed the remainder of life.

At Edgeworthstown, Oliver is said to have written verses ; but on what subject, or of what degree



of merit, is not known. His taste for poetry, there is no doubt, was soon formed. Among the poems familiar in the school, from a spirit of boyish patriotism, were the works of their countrymen Denham, Roscommon, and Parnell; the former born, at least, in Ireland; the second a native of the immediate vicinity, and a member of one of its chief families, the Dillons; and the last not only very popular by his "Hermit," but had been personally known to their relatives. From these writers Goldsmith is believed to have first derived his style, general taste, and devotion to what was considered the classical models of the art. The fact may have been as stated; but the impression, more probably, arises from Denham being deemed the founder of descriptive poetry, in which quality the "Traveller and "Deserted Village" are considered to excel. It is a more curious coincidence that Denham and Roscommon were noted for their propensity to gaming, and the same charge, with whatever truth, has been brought against Goldsmith.

The immediate vicinity presented two persons whose fame was recent, and their poetical attributes sufficiently prominent to draw the attention of a youth of imaginative disposition.

One was Carolan, or Turlogh O'Carolan, the celebrated native musician and poet, who, having spent his life in the neighbouring counties, died there in 1738; an event of no ordinary importance in the estimation of a people attached to every relic of ancient habits and manners, and priding them-

selves on the genius of one of their countrymen exclusively in heart and character Irish. He had been brought up at Carrick-on-Shannon, where the uncle of Goldsmith, the Rev. Mr. Contarine, first settled, and expired in the county of Roscommon, to which that gentleman afterwards removed. His fame was general as well as recent; his name and performances consequently familiar to Oliver, whose occasional visits to his relatives took him over the ground trodden by one whom all classes were proud to talk about and to entertain. When on a visit to Ballyoughter he is said to have been once carried to visit him.

Carolan is considered the last of the ancient Irish bards; one of those characters around whom poetry, music, and tradition have thrown an air of veneration not extended to any of their successors in the art. By profession a retainer to rank and wealth, honoured with the familiarity and friendship of his patrons, beloved and admired by the people, he travelled the country with his horse and his harp, repaying such as performed the duties of hospitality with his music. The misfortune of blindness, from the age of eighteen, by small-pox, increased the interest attached to his occupation and character. He delighted in festivities, the appropriate scene, indeed, of a harper, and indulged freely in the habits which revelling inspires. He disdained to play merely for money. For many years he formed a welcome and admired guest among the older and more opulent families

of Connaught ; composed songs and music in their praise ; played with taste and skill ; and while thus acquiring fame, bestowed it ; for many of his airs and verses are called after the names of his entertainers, who have thus acquired in Ireland a species of local immortality.

Such a character among a people naturally joyous, attached to music, strongly national, clinging to old customs with tenacity, and not yet free from many ruder characteristics, commanded a large share of popularity. His music spoke a general language, and added much to the native stock of which Ireland can boast.\* His songs, though written in Irish, found ready translation ; became a theme of praise in the conversation of all classes ;

\* The fertility and merit of this remnant of the bards, whose name and performances are so little known in England, attest his genius ; while the occasion of the composition of the greater part gives us a view at that period of the primitive manners of the people. Mr. Hardiman, with whom the writer had the pleasure of an acquaintance in Dublin, and whose industry in the pursuit of works of Irish genius deserves so much praise, enumerates about one hundred and thirty of his compositions, many of which continue highly popular, and were accompanied by words also of his own composition. They take their names chiefly from himself, or from the persons whom he celebrated. Thus, " Carolan's Concerto," " Dream," " Devotion," " Elevation," " Fairy Queens," " Receipt for Drinking," and many more. A few of those called after the families in his favourite county of Roscommon are, " O'Connor Faby," " Young O'Connor Faby," " Mrs. O'Connor," " Mrs. O'Connor of Belanagari," " Denis O'Connor," " Doctor O'Connor," " Maurice O'Connor," " Planxty Conon," " Planxty Drury," " John Duignan," " Mrs. French," " Nelly Plunket," " Planxty Stafford," " M'Dermott Roe," " Mrs. M'Dermott Roe," " Anna M'Dermott Roe," " Mr. Edward M'Dermott Roe, &c. &c."

and at the period of his death in the adjoining county of Roscommon, were sung with delight by the peasantry in their social meetings. Impressions produced by the admiration of those around us take a strong hold on juvenile minds; what we hear praised we desire to imitate, for imitation is one of the first faculties which develops itself in early life; and of this blind native genius there is ample proof that Goldsmith heard and remembered much, by the account which he afterwards gave of him in a periodical work in London.\*

The other local poet, Lawrence Whyte, was a bard of more humble pretensions, who, by the description of country manners and national grievances, acquired some rural reputation. He is said to have been a native of Westmeath, not far distant from the paternal home of Goldsmith. His volume appeared about 1741, and, by the aid of a tolerable list of subscribers, among which appears the name of Allan Ramsay, together with a few preliminary lines addressed to him, reached a second edition. It contains some thousand lines, in the measure and something in the manner of Swift. His humour, though homely, is lively and without ill-nature; his subjects local, commencing—as it seems the gentry of Ireland have never earned a name for discharging their pecuniary obligations—with an “Essay on Dunning,” which extends to seven, though short, cantos. The best piece is the “Parting Cup, or the Humours of Deoch an Doruis,”

\* See Paper on Carolan, the Irish Bard, Works, Vol. I.

in four cantos : it is a lively and striking picture of a Westmeath farmer's life about the year 1710, in the supposed history of Deoch an Doruis and his spouse : their former content, comparative wealth, hospitality, and sportive entertainments at the Christmas season, compared with their present (1741) distress and privations, the diminution of good feeling towards their superiors, and the discontent engendered by the pressure of high rents.

By this and other pieces in the volume, we find that the common rural complaints of Ireland,—the exactions of landlords, the spirit of emigration, the absenteeism of the gentry, with the neglect of their tenantry, estates, and residences,—were as strongly urged a century ago as at present. The matter is curious, and though sung in the most homely strains, not without force ; but the verses are further deserving notice, as having been supposed to impress Goldsmith's mind at an early period with strong commiseration for the state of the peasantry, and to have suggested passages in the "Deserted Village."

\* \* \* \* \*

" Thus farmers lived like gentlemen,  
Ere lands were raised from five to ten ;  
Again from ten to three times five,  
Then very few could hope to thrive ;  
But tugg'd against the rapid stream,  
Which drove them back from whence they came,  
At length 'twas canted\* to a pound,  
What tenant then could keep his ground.

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\* Auctioned.

“ Not knowing which, to stand or fly,  
When rent rolls mounted zenith high,  
They had their choice to run away,  
Or labour for a groat a day.  
Now beggar'd and of all bereft,  
Are doom'd to starve or live by theft ;  
Take to the mountains or the roads,  
When banished from their old abodes ;  
*Their native soil were forced to quit,*  
*So Irish landlords thought it fit ;*  
*Who without ceremony or rout,*  
*For their improvements turn'd them out ;*  
Embracing still the highest bidder,  
Inviting all ye *nations hither,*  
Encouraging all strollers, caitiffs,  
Or any other but the natives.

“ Now wool is low and mutton cheap,  
Poor graziers can no profit reap.  
Alas ! you hear them now complain  
Of heavy rents and little grain ;  
Grown sick of bargains got by *cant,*  
Must be in time reduced to want ;  
*How many villages they razed,*  
*How many parishes laid waste,*  
To fatten bullocks, sheep, and cows,  
When scarce one parish has two ploughs ;  
And were it not for foreign wheat,  
We now should want the bread we eat.  
Their flocks do range on every plain,  
That once produced all kind of grain,  
Depopulating every village,  
Where we had husbandry and tillage ;  
Fat bacon, poultry, and good bread,  
By which the poor were daily fed.  
The landlords, then, at every gale,  
Besides their rent, got nappy ale,  
A hearty welcome and good cheer,  
With rent well paid them twice a year ;  
But now the case is quite reversed,  
The tenants every day distress'd ;



Instead of living well and thriving,  
 There's nothing now but leading, *driving*—  
 The lands are all monopolized,  
 The tenants rack'd and sacrificed ;  
*Whole colonies to shun the fate*  
*Of being oppress'd at such a rate,*  
*By tyrants who still raise their rent,*  
*Sail'd to the Western continent :*  
 Rather than live at home like slaves,  
 They trust themselves to winds and waves."

The censure of absentees has a variety of invective intermixed with some humour ; but the following may suffice as a specimen of the former :—

" Our squires of late through Europe roam,  
 Are too well-bred to live at home ;  
 Are not content with Dublin College,  
 But range abroad for greater knowledge ;  
 To strut in velvets and brocades,  
 At balls and plays and masquerades ;  
 To have their rent their chiefest care is,  
 In bills to London and to Paris.  
 Their education is so nice,  
 They know all chances on the dice ;  
 Excepting when it is their fate  
 To throw away a good estate,  
 Then does the squire with empty purse  
 Rail at ill fortune with a curse.

\* \* \* \*

These absentees we here describe  
 Are mostly of our Irish Tribe,  
 Who live in luxury and pleasure,  
 And throw away their time and treasure ;  
 Cause poverty and devastation,  
 And sink the credit of the nation.

\* \* \* \*

Their mansions moulder quite away,  
 And run to ruin and decay,



Left like a desert wild and waste,  
Without the track of man or beast ;  
Where wild fowl may with safety rest,  
At every gate may build a nest ;  
Where grass or weeds on pavements grow,  
And every year is fit to mow.  
No smoke from chimnies does ascend,  
Nor entertainment for a friend ;  
Nor sign of drink, nor smell of meat,  
For human creatures there to eat.\*

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\* One of the greatest offences of the more opulent classes in Ireland in the eyes of the peasantry at that time, was any seeming want of the duties of hospitality ; nor has the feeling, though diminished, passed away. By their interpretation, common to more rude communities, a man of rank or wealth was considered almost literally rather the steward than the proprietor of his property, held in trust as much for the benefit of his relatives, neighbours, and adherents, as for his own family ; and almost the first point noticed in the character of an Irish squire by a peasant of the present day is whether he is or is not a *hard* (or close) man. The opening scenes in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and many other passages in Goldsmith, dwell upon the duties of hospitality.

## CHAP. II.

ADVENTURE AT ARDAGH.—REV. MR. CONTARINE.—ENTRY  
INTO TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.—LETTER OF THE REV.  
DR. WILSON, HIS TUTOR.—BALLAD WRITING.

**H**IS school vacations were frequently spent in the town of Ballymahon, where, many years afterwards, a few of his boyish tricks were remembered.

“It is now about forty years,” says the Rev. John Graham in a communication to the present writer, “since one of the directors of the sports of Ballymahon, Jack Fitzsimmons, an old man, who had experienced many vicissitudes and then kept the ball court, frequently amused us with stories of, as he termed him and as he was usually called when a boy, Noll Goldsmith. One of them, I remember, related to a depredation on the orchard of Tirlicken, adjoining the old mansion of that name now in ruins, then the property and residence of part of Lord Annaly’s family. In this adventure, which he detailed minutely, both were engaged: detection, however, either at the moment or soon afterwards, ensued; and, had it not been for the respectability of Goldsmith’s connections, which secured immunity also to his companions, the consequences might have been unpleasant. This story,

although it may seem like a different version of the deer-stealing of Shakspeare, I had no reason to disbelieve : the matter is common enough to most school-boys in the country ; and poor Jack knew no more of the history of Shakspeare than of Homer. Several other notices of the poet from the same source have now escaped my recollection ; the impression, however, remains, that he was as thoughtless as other boys of the same age, and as easily led into scrapes by his companions."

An amusing adventure, which occurred in the last journey from home to Edgeworthstown school, is believed to have given birth to the chief incident in "She Stoops to Conquer." Having set off on horseback, there being then and indeed now no regular wheeled conveyance thither from Ballymahon, he loitered on the road, amusing himself by viewing the neighbouring gentlemen's seats. A friend had furnished him with a guinea ; and the desire, perhaps, of spending it in (to a school-boy) the most independent manner at an inn, tended to slacken his diligence on the road. Night overtook him in the small town of Ardagh, about half way on his journey. Inquiring for the best house in the place, meaning the best inn, he chanced to address, as is said, a person named Cornelius Kelly, who boasted of having taught fencing to the Marquis of Granby, and was then domesticated in the house of Mr. Featherstone, a gentleman of fortune in the town. He was known as a notorious wag ; and willing to play off a trick upon one whom he no doubt disco-

vered to be a swaggering school-boy, directed him to the house of his patron.

Suspecting no deception, Oliver proceeded as directed ; gave authoritative orders about the care of his horse ; and, being thence conceived by the servants to be an expected guest, was ushered into the presence of their master, who immediately discovered the mistake. Being, however, a man of humour, and willing to enjoy an evening's amusement with a boy under the influence of so unusual a blunder, he encouraged it, particularly when, by the communicative disposition of the guest, it was found he was the son of an old acquaintance on his way to school. Nothing occurred to undeceive the self-importance of the youth, fortified by the possession of a sum he did not often possess ; wine was therefore ordered in addition to a good supper, and the supposed landlord, his wife and daughters, were invited to partake of it. On retiring for the night, a hot cake was ordered for breakfast the following morning ; nor was it until preparing to quit the house next day, that he discovered he had been entertained in a private family.

This story, like the plot of his comedy, has been thought improbable ; and were it told of a person in mature life, or mixing much in the world, there might be, under common circumstances, ground for disbelief. But when we consider the age of Goldsmith at the time, his openness to deception at all times, that the time was night,

while positive information described the house as an inn, and that the submission of the servants and the humour of the master confirmed the original idea ; moreover, when we consider that the house, however good, bore no particular mark of distinction, and that Irish landlords then, like those of America now, were inquisitive and familiar in their manners, and believed that their guests were under more obligations to them than they to their guests, it is easy to conceive how a school-boy should be led into the error. Mrs. Hodson heard the story early in life, which could scarcely have been told without some foundation ; and the late Sir Thomas Featherstone\*, whose grandfather was the supposed landlord, remembered, when questioned, something of the anecdote.

In connection with this play, the story illustrates another peculiarity which belongs to Goldsmith more than to any other writer of his day ; this was to draw upon his own personal and family history for many of the facts and characters found in his writings. These, when minutely traced, show how largely he has written from himself, from his recollections, experience, and feelings ; and to this is owing much of that truth, vigour, and freshness, of which we all feel the presence and the power. Thus, to his poems, novel, plays, *Citizen of the World*, and detached essays, actual life furnished most of the scenes and persons ; not only his own character

\* From the Rev. John Graham.

and adventures, but those of nearly all his relatives, were taxed for the amusement of the reader : so that when invention failed, he had only to draw upon his memory. The recollection of this fact may serve to corroborate the truth of the preceding story having really formed the groundwork of the play.

An event now occurred, which though under other circumstances gratifying, threatened in its consequences to interfere with the design of sending him to college by still further narrowing his father's resources. This was the private marriage of his elder sister, Catherine, with Mr. Daniel Hodson, the son of a gentleman of good property, residing at St. John's, near Athlone. To her the union promised to be advantageous ; while, to her husband, in consequence of her want of fortune, it was thought the reverse. He was besides young, though not a boy ; and being at the moment, or shortly before, a pupil of her brother Henry for the completion of his studies, the match looked so much like a breach of confidence and honour on the part of the family, although unknown to its members, as to give rise to extreme indignation on the part of her father. The tradition is, that in the first transports of anger he uttered a wish that as she had acted like an undutiful child in causing suspicion to be cast on his integrity of character, she might never have one of her own to make a similar return to parental care ; in short, that she might die childless.\* So harsh

\* From the information of one of her granddaughters to the Rev. Mr. Graham.



and hasty a sentence, foreign to his general character for good nature, was soon recalled; neither was the purport of the prayer strictly fulfilled; as she bore three children; but, in the superstitious feeling of the country, it was supposed to be not without a certain effect, as they all, though her son left a numerous offspring, died before her.

To remove all suspicion of being privy to the act of his daughter, Mr. Goldsmith, influenced by the highest sense of honour, made a sacrifice detrimental to the interests of the other members of his family. He entered into a legal engagement (Sept. 7, 1744), "to pay to Daniel Hodson, Esq., of St. John's, Roscommon, 400*l.*, as the marriage-portion of his daughter Catherine, then the wife of the said Daniel Hodson." To raise this sum, with such limited means as he possessed, was impossible; but in lieu of it, the lands rented from Mr. Newstead, then worth about 40*l.* per annum, in addition to 12*l.* per annum of tithes, were assigned, until the money should be paid.\* These sums, which seem now apparently small, were in that period and country considerable; much more than the rector of Kilkenny West could afford. His living, though at present worth about 350*l.* per annum, did not then amount to 200*l.* The sacrifice consequently was

\* See a draft of this agreement in the registry of the Four Courts, Dublin, B. 117. p. 503. No. 81604. For assistance in the search for this and other legal documents connected with the Goldsmith family, I am indebted to Mr. Thomas Colhoun, of Dublin, whose professional knowledge made more easy what I should otherwise have found a work of time and labour.



great ; it evinced all the sincerity of an honest, but not the consideration of a prudent man, and, though satisfactory to his pride, crippled the means of providing for the remainder of his children.

The immediate effect of this reduction of income fell more heavily on Oliver, who instead of entering college like his brother, a pensioner, was obliged to contemplate the more humble condition of sizer. From this, as a tacit confession of limited means, if not of poverty, his pride, it is traditionally said, revolted : in his own opinion, it occasioned many subsequent mortifications, deprived him of that consideration among his companions to which youth attaches so much value, and by the privations in consequence endured, depressed his spirit at the time, and even influenced the tenor of his future life, by rendering poverty so familiar that she was never afterwards viewed with terror. In vain it is said his father endeavoured to conquer what he considered merely juvenile pride ; but a more persuasive adviser appeared in his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Contarine, who had married a sister of M. Goldsmith. At his house the youth had been a frequent visitor during school vacations ; he had likewise contributed to the expense of his education ; and having continued through life an active and steadfast friend, his kindness deserves some further notice here.

He derived his origin from a member of the noble family of the Contarini of Venice, who, having entered into one of the monastic orders, was imprudent enough to form an attachment to a lady

similarly situated, a noble nun ; and both wanting resolution to subdue their passion, an elopement and marriage took place. Unable to remain in Italy from this double violation of the laws of the church, they fled to France, where his wife died of small-pox. Here he found himself pursued by ecclesiastical hostility, and for better security proceeded to England. In London his faith probably formed no introduction to favour, and Ireland was sought as a more congenial asylum. At Chester, on his way thither, he met with a young lady named Chaloner, related to Doctor Chaloner some time provost of Trinity College, Dublin, who possessing a fluent knowledge of his native language, they found pleasure in the society of each other, until the intercourse terminated in marriage. Attachment to his original faith had probably become loosened by the persecution he had experienced. Conforming, therefore, to the Protestant Church, he obtained by the interest of his wife's connections ecclesiastical preferment in the diocese of Elphin ; and of this couple Mr. Contarine was the grandchild.

He was born at Cheshire, sent to school at Wrexham, in the adjoining county of Denbigh ; but removing to Ireland at the age of seventeen, entered Trinity College the following year (1702),\*

\* "1702 Octobris die 2<sup>o</sup>.—*Tho. Contarine Sizator—Filius Austin Conterine Coloni—Annum agens 18—Natus Cestuiæ—Educatus Wrexom in Walliæ sub Ma. Maxwell—Tutor, Sub. Tizardall.*"—College Register.

where he became distinguished for talents and diligence, as well as for the possession of those moral qualities that confer on talents their highest value. A proof of the esteem in which he was held, and of which any one might be proud, was an intimate friendship with the celebrated Bishop Berkley, then his senior in the university about a year, and by whom he is said to have been selected to attend him in the dangerous experiment of ascertaining the degree of pain suffered during strangulation, on which occasion he saved the life of the philosopher. Taking orders, he procured the living of Killmore, near Carrick on Shannon, and afterwards that of Oran, near Roscommon, where he built and resided in a pretty house called Emblemore, changed by its subsequent possessor, Mr. Edward Mills, a relative of Goldsmith, for the more classical appellation of Tempe. He lies buried in his church, about a mile and half distant from the house.

Here he was frequently visited by Mr. Charles O'Connor, also residing in the county of Roscommon, distinguished for his knowledge of Irish antiquities, who found reason to be pleased with his taste and intelligence. The grandson of this gentleman, the late Dr. O'Connor, librarian at Stowe, in *Memoirs of his relative*, printed but not published, thus speaks of Mr. Contarine:—

“ Mr. O'Connor was not yet known as an author, but he began to be noticed as an ingenious man. The first acquaintance with whom he opened a

literary correspondence was Dr. Fergus ; the next was the Rev. Thomas Contarine, a clergyman of the Established Church, and the well-known companion of Bishop Berkley. He was son to an Italian of the Contarini family at Venice. His parts and the goodness of his heart procured him the friendship of one of the greatest geniuses of the age, and it is to him Goldsmith alludes in his *Deserted Village*." Here follow the lines, beginning

" Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled, &c.

By the following passage from the same work, it would appear as if the Poet had seen under the roof of his uncle another of the characters sketched in the poem,—that of the Veteran,—in an officer of some rank. This may be correct ; but the terms in which the invitation to the supposed visitor are couched, " kindly bade to stay," imply more of a dependant than the rank assigned him by Mr. O'Connor would warrant, unless we believe the condescension is assumed for the sake of poetic effect :

" It is not generally known that Major M'Dermott, of Emlagh, in the county of Roscommon, was the old soldier to whom Goldsmith alluded in the following lines—

' The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
Sate by the fire and talk'd the night away ;  
Wept o'er his wounds, and tales of sorrow done,  
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.'

“ I had this anecdote (adds Dr. O'Connor) from Mr. O'Connor, who often saw the Major at Con-tarine's house, and enjoyed his society so much, that he repeatedly spoke of him, even in his last years, as a person whom he never could forget, on account of the vivacity of his temper, and the affecting emotions with which he would tell the history of his own adventures.”\*

With his uncle Oliver spent most of the time he was absent from school, and is believed by the family to have derived advantage from his superintendence not only in study, but in the cultivation of those generous feelings by which he was afterwards distinguished. This kind and considerate man saw in him a warmth of heart requiring some skill to direct, and a latent genius that wanted time to mature ; and these impressions none of his subsequent follies and irregularities wholly obliterated. His purse and affection therefore, as well as his house, were ever open to him : the nephew knew the value of his regard ; and however pleasure or thoughtlessness led him to neglect the admonitions of so benevolent and judicious a friend, his gratitude and attachment, whenever he had occasion to write or speak of him, were not the less ardent and sincere.

More attention was probably shown him by this gentleman on account of having no son of his own,

\* “ Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the late Charles O'Connor, of Belaganore, by his Grandson, the Rev. Charles O'Connor, D.D.,” obligingly communicated by Mr. Smith, librarian at Stowe.

the only child by his marriage with Miss Goldsmith being a daughter, afterwards Mrs. Jane Lawder, a few years older than the poet, and to whom he wrote some letters, still in existence, when in London. The death of Mrs. Contarine, in June, 1744, produced no diminution of regard in his uncle.\* He is said to have taken the trouble to point out to the youth, in affectionate terms, the advantages of entering college in the only manner his father's circumstances now permitted; that no degradation was implied by it, for he had himself entered in a similar manner; that he had thus acquired the friendship of the eminent and the good; and that it would be highly to his credit, and probably benefit his future prospects, to enter the university

\* Mr. M. A. Mills, a relative of the Goldsmith family, with whose father the Poet was intimately acquainted at college, and who is now the proprietor of Tempe, which was visited by the writer in 1830, thus communicates some particulars of the monumental remains of that family:—

“After three successive days’ excavation among the ruins of Oran Church, I discovered the monumental stone placed over the remains of the Contarine family. It was erected by the Rev. Thomas Contarine, vicar of this parish, to the memory of several of his family, concluding with ‘his dearest wife, Jane Contarine, who, after a well-spent life, departed out of it the 12th day of June, 1744, in the 63rd year of her age.’ But although Dr. Contarine died in this house, and was buried in the same place, the stone contains no notice of the time of his death or of his age. The sculpture is in relief, of a very rude description. One corner of the stone is broken, by which a word is defaced; but as a fac-simile may gratify you, I will make an attempt at it. \* \* \* Mrs. Contarine, formerly Miss Jane Goldsmith, and aunt of the poet, was likewise aunt to my father; thus our connection, or rather relationship.”



in a class into which admission, of itself, implied some advancement in his studies.

A story told him by this gentleman of two of his relatives by the female side, illustrates the prevailing propensity of the Poet to introduce his family history into his writings. In an essay printed in 1760, and now first included in his works, called "A True History for the Ladies\*," appears a story contrasting romantic with reasonable love. It is told of Thomas and James Chaloners, maternal relatives of his uncle. The names are given at length, and the circumstances, with slight embellishment, were true.

The former of these gentlemen, Thomas, married above his own rank, clandestinely and for love, a lady of beauty and fortune; the latter took a homely partner in his own sphere of life, and without the least touch of romance in their courtship or union. Both brothers were soon after called by a question of property to Ireland; but a storm arising, threatened the vessel with destruction on the rocks lining the Irish coast. Thomas, in this emergency, determined to remain and die with his bride: James, who was something more of a philosopher, found there was a chance of escape by swimming; and, telling his wife he would save her if he could, plunged into the sea and reached the shore. Contrary to all expectation the vessel was saved. The more romantic pair felt pride in the superior ardour of their attachment, and fondly believed that the same feeling of

\* See Works, vol. i.



devotion could never cease. The sacrifice, however, meditated on this alarming occasion came to be expected afterward on all the minor matters of life by one, while proportionate gratitude for such compliances were sought or exacted from the other. Both were disappointed; each expected too much from the other, and could not conceal their dissatisfaction when undeceived. Constraint was mutually felt; for love, to be lasting, must be free. Slight negligences arose, followed by jealousies and complaints; and these produced recriminations, coolness, and sullen silence. Returning affection caused the first disagreements to be made up; but the original error of demanding more from human nature than its imperfections permit, constantly renewed them. Gradually they became more serious, causing first indifference, and then alienation; so that aversion, and, at length, separation, was the result. On the other hand, James and his wife, the more sober couple, of cooler temperaments and expectations, went through life with equanimity,—their content greater if their raptures fewer; lived very comfortably, entertained their friends hospitably, and reared a numerous family, for which they contrived to provide.

The moral he inculcates in this story is, that “Love between the sexes should be regarded as an inlet to friendship; nor should the most beautiful of either hope to continue the passion a month beyond the wedding day. Marriage strips love of all its finery; and if friendship does not

appear to supply its place, there is then an end of matrimonial felicity."

The time having arrived for entering the university, Oliver was admitted a sizer of Trinity College, Dublin, June 11, 1745. An error in the year of admission has prevailed in all accounts hitherto given of him, which arises from the university year commencing on the 9th July, so that the six previous months appear, to an inadvertent examiner, to be of earlier date than they really are.

The following is the entry extracted from the official register, in which however there are two errors; one, stating him to be born in Westmeath, which arose from the abode of his father being in that county; and the other, in representing him to be only fifteen years old when he was really more than sixteen, if the date of his birth, November 1728, be, as we must believe, correct:—

1744 (Really 1745) 11o. Junii.	Oliver Goldsmith, Siz.	Fillius Caroli Clerici.	Annum Agens 15.	Natus in Comitatu Westmeath.	Educatus sub ferula Ma. Hughes.	Tutor, Ma. Wilder.
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In a list of eight sizers entered on the same day, his name is the last enrolled. His answering, therefore, in the previous examination, it is presumed, was less satisfactory than that of others, there being on such occasions a contest for superiority among such as apply for the benefits of the foundation. But, considering that he was the junior candidate of the party, and no doubt triumphed over many other competitors, the fact of admission at all is evidence of considerable proficiency in classical knowledge.

There are five classes of students in Trinity College ; noblemen, noblemen's sons, fellow-commoners, pensioners, and sizers or servitors, or, as they have been sometimes called in familiar language, in Ireland, poor scholars : one of those judicious and considerate arrangements of the founders of such institutions, that gives to the less opulent the opportunity of cultivating learning at a trifling expense. The sizer has his commons and tuition free, and pays for his chambers a sum little more than nominal ; while, by officiating as chanter at chapel, what is called regulator at commons, or other minor offices, he has the opportunity, if industriously disposed, of gaining sums that may, with economy, render him nearly independent of assistance from his friends.

To obtain these advantages he is expected to come more advanced in classical learning than others : he is commonly of a riper age ; is expected to display application in his studies ; and in time to acquire, or to struggle for, university honours, such as a scholarship or premiums. He wears a black gown of coarse stuff without sleeves ; a plain black cloth cap without a tassel ; and dines at the Fellows' table after they have retired. At the period in question they wore red caps, and were compelled to perform derogatory offices, such as sweeping part of the courts in the morning, carrying up the dishes from the kitchen to the Fellows' dinner table, and waiting in the hall until that body had dined.

From the more menial compliances they have long been relieved ; and from the last, that of

carrying up dinner, about fifty years ago, by a sizer flinging one of the dishes with its contents at the head of a citizen, who, on Trinity Sunday, when many assembled to witness the scene, made impertinent remarks on the duty he was obliged to perform. When brought before the then provost (Murray), who had himself been a sizer, for this irregularity, the latter had the manliness to tell the student that it was but a paltry species of pride to be above the performance of what college regulations required ; that he (the provost) had performed them with humility and thankfulness in return for the advantages received, and which had raised him from nothing to the situation he then held. With a sharp rebuke to the offender, porters were thenceforward appointed to relieve the sizers from this mark of servitude.

In the routine of these duties, Goldsmith no doubt took his share ; and the indignant feeling they occasioned in a sensitive mind breaks out in the *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*, when speaking of universities :—" Sure pride itself has dictated to the fellows of our colleges the absurd passion of being attended at meals and on other public occasions, by those poor men who, willing to be scholars, come in upon some charitable foundation. It implies a contradiction, for men to be at once learning the liberal arts and at the same time treated as slaves ; at once studying freedom and practising servitude."\*

\* See Works, vol. i.

Something of the same kind appears again in a letter to his brother written soon after this time, in which, however, the unquestionable benefits derived to indigence from the institution are admitted :—

“ The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar are judicious and convincing. I should however be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous and divested of strong passions (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure), he may do very well in your college ; for it must be owned that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him except your own.”

At present, students of this description have no just cause for complaint in Dublin. It is obviously for the advantage of the class of persons whom it is meant to benefit that some difference, though neither derogatory nor unreasonable, should exist between them and other students. Were all distinction abrogated, the sons of those whose circumstances do not require the indulgence would not hesitate to become sizers ; and in time the really indigent, who are too often likewise the friendless, would either be excluded, or the number of candidates so much increased,—and there are always many more than can be admitted,—as to diminish materially the chance of being received.

One of those preceding him on the list on the day of entry, was his friend and school-fellow from Edgeworthstown, afterwards the Rev. John Beatty, his senior in years and superior in attainments; an advantage which, as appears from the records, he retained during the whole of their stay in college. They were placed under the same tutor, and became, as is believed by the relatives of the latter, for a time, what is familiarly called among the students *chums*, that is, occupied the same apartments; these were the top rooms adjoining the library of the building now numbered 35, and where the name of the poet, scratched on a window pane with a diamond, in one of his idle moods, is still to be seen. Another, who is said to have stood in the same familiar relation to him at a subsequent period, was the Rev. Josiah Marshall, afterwards rector of Garvagh, in the county of Londonderry. Others have been named who died at a more remote period; and a few contemporaries who remembered him survived in various parts of Ireland at the commencement of this century.

Among such as are known to have been his intimate associates were Mr. Edward Mills, a relative, Robert Bryanton, Charles and Edward Purdon, James Willington (with whom he afterwards became associated in London) and Doctors Thomas Wilson and Michael Kearney, afterwards fellows of the college. The Rev. Mr. Wolfen and Mr. Lauchlan Maclean knew him well; and he appears to have been slightly remembered by



Burke and Flood ; Richard Malone, afterwards Lord Sunderlin ; Bishops Bernard, Marlay, and Stopford ; the two former afterwards well known in the literary circles of London.

The first notice of his college career was derived from Dr. Thomas Wilson. Early in 1776, Mr. Edmond Malone, to whose critical labours our poetical literature is so much indebted, having collected the works of the poet for publication in Dublin, in two volumes 12mo. (1777)—afterwards republished in 1780 by Evans, a bookseller in London—applied to that gentleman for such memorials as official records supplied, and in return received the following letter, transcribed from the original now in possession of the writer.\* It was never before printed. A few memoranda were added of his entry into college, and the time of obtaining his degree, which being erroneous in part, need not appear here ; the former is already, and the latter will be hereafter given correctly ; with a notice of a youthful indiscretion in which the poet became involved.

“ I send you,” writes Dr. Wilson, Feb. 24, 1776, “ all the intelligence I can derive from the College Registry relating to Dr. Goldsmith. ’Twill clear up one point, which will prove a satisfaction to his surviving friends, as it will show that he was never expelled, and that the offence for which he was

\* By favour of Dr. H. U. Thomson, of Piccadilly, London.



censured was only a juvenile indiscretion, and did not in the least affect his moral character.

“ While he resided in the college, he exhibited no specimens of that genius which in his maturer years raised his character so high. Squalid poverty and its concomitants, idleness and despondence, probably checked every aspiring hope, and repressed the exertion of his talents ; and the savage brutality that shone so conspicuous in the truly amiable gentleman (Mr. Wilder) who was to rule his studies under the notion of a tutor, was better calculated to frighten than to allure.

“ I well remember, for he was in the class below me, that his tutor examining him in the Sen. Soph. class, commenced his judgments with a *Male*, and concluded them with a *Valde Bene*. 'Twas a mistake that the good Doctor (the tutor) often fell into, to think he was witty when he was simply malicious. Possibly the world is obliged for his (Goldsmith's) works to his idleness and miscarriages in the college, which deprived him of all hope of rising in the church to a curacy, on which he might have comfortably starved to a good old age.”

The character of the unhappy person to whom the direction of his studies was entrusted, “ under the notion of a tutor,” as Dr. Wilson expresses it, appears to have been wholly unfit, either in temper or general conduct for the superintendence of youth. Many unfavourable stories are still told of him in the university ; and the mortifications endured by his

pupil from mingled caprice and harshness, were supposed to have not only obstructed his progress in learning but in producing despondency and irregularities, tinged with a darker hue parts of his future life. This person was fixed upon from being the younger son of a gentleman living within a few miles of the Rev. Mr. Goldsmith, and Oliver had been especially recommended to his care. He possessed considerable scientific attainments, clouded by a disposition represented as almost savage, and passions so irregular as to require for himself that indulgence he rarely extended to others. In Dublin he was noted for strength, agility, and ferocity; an instance of which was exhibited in the streets by springing, at a bound, from the pavement on a hackney coach proceeding at a fast pace, and felling to the ground the driver, who had accidentally touched his face with the whip. Of his strange caprice or injustice in the performance of his public duties, the Rev. Dr. Marsh mentioned an instance. When filling the Senior Lecturer's chair, the first three places were admitted to be the right of Marsh, Mead, and Hans, the best answerers in the order of their names, which he thought fit to transpose in the order of Hans, Mead, and Marsh, assigning as the reason the superior euphony of the latter arrangement.

To such students as incurred his dislike, he proved a bitter persecutor at the public examinations; and an illustration of this disposition appears in the vindictive conduct adopted towards another.

When a student himself, he found constant means of evading college discipline, and gaining egress from its walls at night by the connivance of a companion, whose window in the front square being secured by an iron palisading, a moveable bar had been skilfully introduced unknown to the authorities, which admitted of removal at pleasure. Soon afterwards (1744), he was elected to a fellowship : the office of Subdean, who has charge of the general conduct of the students, came to him in rotation ; and now, from being an offender against discipline he became its most strict, and often severe preserver. The first exertion of authority was a visit to the apartment of which he had formerly so often made use, but unexpectedly he found the outlet already secured. On sternly inquiring of its then possessor, a friend of the previous occupier, whether there had not been a screw bar before the window, the reply was in the affirmative, and that *he* very well knew it. To further questions uttered in an insulting manner, by whom the alteration was made, the student (afterwards the Rev. Mr. G——, an amiable man) was tempted to reply, “ By me, sir ; for I *knew you*.” The remark was never forgiven ; he assailed him unremittingly ever afterwards at the public examinations, and when his proficiency admitted of little censure, found a handle for ill nature and sarcasm in the personal peculiarities of the youth. These in return produced retorts not quite in keeping with subordination, or the decorum of the place and

occasion, until at length an opportunity offered of turning him down to the bottom of his class.

With passions so uncontrolled and unamiable, he could be considerate and charitable. On the death of Dr. Maguire, about 1768, he succeeded to the mathematical chair; at his own expense, he published, for the benefit of the widow and family, an edition of Newton's Arithmetic, prepared for the press by the deceased, with copious notes by himself. He intimated likewise a design of completing and publishing, from the same kind motives, three other unfinished treatises of his predecessor, on Arithmetic, Equations, and Ratios. And it may be remarked that at the moment (1770) he first appeared in the press, his quondam pupil, after long struggling with obscurity and poverty, had attained the summit of literary reputation. The end of this gentleman proved as melancholy as his habits had been exceptionable. Early in 1770, he quitted the university for one of its livings, that of Rathmelton in the county of Donegal. Here, it is said, a female of equivocal character exercised such influence in his house as to deny him admission when he chose to stop out late at night, and on attempting at such times to enter by the window, usually met with strong resistance, until certain terms of capitulation with the party within had been proposed and accepted. It is therefore scarcely matter of surprise that he was found dead one morning on the floor of his room, with traces

of severe contusion, the cause of which, as no investigation took place, remained unknown.\*

Few things could be more unfortunate for the pupil than the selection—innocently, indeed, for his peculiarities were not then developed—of such a preceptor. His age and thoughtlessness required forbearance ; his temper and habits some indulgence ; his indolence, if it at this time existed, rather persuasion than harsh reproofs and disgraces ; and it further appeared that his tastes and favourite pursuits were classical, while those of his tutor were devoted to science. This did not tend to allay latent prejudices formed by the latter : for the first eighteen months indeed no particular instance of hostility on the one side, or dislike on the other, is recorded, though we had evidence of strong distaste to the usual science course in the university having been early imbibed by him, and a remembrance of the mortification it occasioned, retained by him through life. Poetry and the more abstract studies have little in common ; matters of fact and of imagination rarely retain an equal degree of regard in the same minds ; and we can readily conceive a young man of lively fancy fonder of exercising its qualities, such as they are, than of treasuring up for future use the scientific speculations and acquisitions of philosophers.

As from the first, he did not hesitate to avow

\* Communicated by a grand niece of the Poet, who, became, by marriage, singularly enough, connected with the unfortunate tutor, to the Rev. John Graham.

dislike to all the graver studies of the place, he at a future time appeared to seek an excuse for it ; and many years afterwards, when writing the *Life of Parnell*, seemed willing hypothetically to infer, what he made no attempt to prove, that a similar feeling was entertained by that poet. "His progress," he says, "through the college course of study, was probably marked with but little splendour ; his imagination might have been too warm to relish the cold logic of Burgersdicius, or the dreary subtleties of Smiglesius."\* By the accounts of his friend Beatty, who reasoned with him on his neglect, and the offence likely to be taken by his tutor on this account, he expressed repeatedly his contempt for mathematics, and greater dislike, if possible, toward ethics and logic. In the same spirit he tells us, in the *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*—"Mathematics are, perhaps, too much studied at our universities. This seems a science to which the meanest intellects are equal. I forget who it is that says, 'All men might understand mathematics if they would.' "†

Displeasure, arising from the recollection of re-proofs incurred by neglect of this study, may be traced in several passages of the same work. In the following, in addition to an implied condemnation of science, we have an indirect apology for another

\* See Works, vol. iii.

† See Works, vol. i. The dislike of Gray to mathematics and metaphysics seems to have been quite as great as that of Goldsmith.



of his characteristics soon afterwards developed—a love of gaiety and social enjoyments,—much more easy to censure than at his age to resist :

“ Upon this principle (that of giving, as he says, too much encouragement to seminaries of learning) all our magnificent endowments of colleges are erroneous, and, at best, more frequently enrich the prudent than reward the ingenious. A lad whose passions are not strong enough in youth to mislead him from that path of science which his tutors and not his inclination have chalked out, by four or five years’ perseverance will probably obtain every advantage and honour his college can bestow. I forget whether the simile has been used before, but I would compare the man whose youth has been thus passed in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence to liquors that never ferment, and, consequently, continue always muddy. Passions may raise a commotion in the youthful breast, but they disturb only to refine it. However this be, mean talents in colleges are often rewarded with an easy subsistence. The candidates for preferment of this kind often regard their admission as a patent for future laziness ; so that a life begun in studious labour is often continued in luxurious affluence.”

There is, in these remarks, with perhaps something of truth, more of a querulous spirit arising from his own position while in college, the little consideration he enjoyed in it, or the mortifications it was his lot to experience. It is obviously easy, but fallacious, to censure general systems of education,

because many of the details may be inapplicable to particular individuals. Were it distinctly foreseen, that the youth of to-day is to be the distinguished poet, statesman, or mathematician of a future period, his education might be varied, possibly with advantage, though this by no means follows; for exclusive devotion to one pursuit is as objectionable in education as in other things. But the bent of a boy's mind cannot always be ascertained with precision; even his wishes cannot safely be trusted; and he must, therefore, as the sure method of disciplining and enlarging his faculties, follow "that path which his tutors, and not his inclinations, have chalked out."

That colleges enrich the prudent, is sometimes true; but who are to be rewarded,—the attentive or the negligent? That the ingenious are neglected is so far from being the fact, that young men who exhibit proofs of talent at college are noticed, praised, and even remembered long after the occasion, in a greater degree than their share of merit probably deserved; as the future lives of many have furnished little evidence of superiority. Ingenuity, therefore, in whatever form displayed, rarely passes without its reward. But if the implied compact entered into with such institutions, that of conforming to the system by which they are conducted, be disregarded, no just cause for complaint can fairly exist if their benefits be withheld. Poets, indeed, may think otherwise; and several of our distinguished names in that class looked back with little satisfac-

tion to the period of their lives spent at a University ; willing, perhaps, to forget their own errors or negligences in the occasional defects or mistakes observed in their instructors ; but it is idle for the inexperienced to find fault with modes of study or the restraints of discipline. When a student complains of his college, the probability is, that the college has much more reason to complain of him.

The truth of the simile employed as illustrative of the force of juvenile passions, although repeated in three other passages of his writings, is very questionable ; for many of our greatest men require no such apology for their youth : the allusion, however, is to himself. A certain thoughtlessness, supposed to belong to the poetical temperament, became early developed, and a facility of temper that rarely resisted importunity of any kind, gave him the character of good nature. His disposition, naturally social and generous, found encouragement in kindred associations with youth. Passions at such seasons, he informs us, lead to pleasure ; and his, from all the accounts that can now be gleaned, appear not to have been inactive, although no specific breaches of propriety, or of college discipline, were at that period laid to his charge. The general effect is supposed to have fostered that disinclination to the proper studies of the place, which on other occasions he felt disposed to attribute wholly to taste : the expenses incurred in amusements but ill suited the nature of his supplies, at all times of a scanty description. A story has been told of his

having at this period formed an imprudent female attachment ; which, but for interposition of some of his friends, was likely to have terminated in marriage.

One of the qualifications which ensured popularity among fellow-students, but often dangerous to the possessor from the temptations to which it leads, was the talent of singing a good song. His voice, naturally tolerable, acquired more power by cultivation, and by a little taste and skilful management became very agreeable. In London, to a late period of life, he amused his friends with Irish songs, exhibiting much of the peculiar humour of his country. A taste for music formed an additional recommendation, though perhaps with no considerable knowledge of it as a science.\* He played tolerably well on the German flute ; it is recorded that even at this time whenever vexed by temporary annoyances he had recourse to this instrument, and blew it with a kind of mechanical vehemence till his equanimity of temper returned.

Early in 1747, his father, whose character he took pleasure in sketching in several of his productions, died ; the induction of his successor, the Rev. Mr. Wynne, taking place in the March of that year. The wealth of the family, never as we have seen great, or as he himself hints, well husbanded, necessarily suffered a serious diminution :

\* See "Of the Opera in England," "Schools of Music," Works, vol. i., and various passages in his writings.

the means of the widow were little more than sufficient to provide the necessities of life for the other branches of her family ; remittances to Oliver therefore ceased, and his prospects became darker than ever. In this situation it would have been necessary to have withdrawn from college, but for the occasional contributions of friends, among whom his uncle Contarine formed the principal ; these were from their nature limited, and perhaps irregular. His difficulties were consequently considerable, during the whole of his subsequent stay in the university, and no doubt often occasioned that state of "squalid poverty" of which Dr. Wilson speaks. In this situation a constitutional buoyancy or, as he phrases it in another place, "a knack at hoping," kept him from despair ; but, when combined with the reproaches of his tutor, rendered frequent despondency and depression unavoidable. Under such circumstances, he was more than once driven to the necessity of pawning his books, until the stated supply arrived, or some friendly hand interposed to release them ; when on such emergencies Beatty\* would lend him others for the purposes of study. The disposal of the books coming to the knowledge of the tutor, he, in addition to bitter taunts and reprehension, said that he was like the silly fellow in Horace — *Mutat quadrata rotundis*.

There is, we are assured, no stimulus to inge-

\* Communicated by his son, the Rev. Mr. Beatty.

nuity like distress. Goldsmith was now taught for the first time to draw upon his resources in a mode which, however beneath the dignity, was not inappropriate to the calling of the future poet. This was the composition of street ballads, to which Beatty\* knew him frequently to resort when in want of small sums for present exigencies. The price of these was five shillings each, and all that he wrote found a ready sale at a shop known as the sign of the Rein-deer, in Mountrath Street. None of the names of these verses were recollected at the time Mr. Beatty related the fact to his friends, but popular occurrences commonly supplied the subjects.† Poor as they may be supposed to have been in character, from the remuneration received, and the class for whom intended, he is said to have exhibited for his offspring all the partiality of a parent, by strolling the streets at night to hear them sung, and marking the degree of applause which each received from the auditors.

\* Communicated by his son, the Rev. Mr. Beatty.

† Mr. Crofton Croker is now making an extensive collection of the ballads of Ireland; and it is just possible that by peculiar allusion or phraseology, something of Goldsmith may be detected.



## CHAP. III.

RIOT OF THE STUDENTS.—SENTENCE UPON GOLDSMITH AND  
OTHERS.—ABSENTS HIMSELF FROM THE UNIVERSITY.—  
ANECDOTES.—TAKES THE DEGREE OF B.A.—HIS FATHER.

IN May, 1747, a riot of the students of Trinity College in which he took part, had nearly involved him in more serious difficulties than any yet experienced, although his tutor\* (for such was the character of this gentleman) was said to have encouraged privately what he was afterwards called upon to punish in his corporate capacity. A few of the particulars are given by Dr. Wilson, in the postscript to the letter to Malone already quoted:—

“Several scholars were expelled for raising a sedition and riot in the city of Dublin. ’Twas occasioned by a report that a scholar had been arrested in Fleet Street. To revenge this supposed insult, a numerous body of scholars rushed into town under the command of *Gallows* Walsh,—who in those days was controller-general of riots,—explored the dens of the bailiffs, conducted the prisoners in triumph to the college, and pumped

\* Communicated by Mr. Webbe, author of “Travels on the Rhine, in Switzerland, and Italy.”

them soundly in the old cistern. In those days of primitive simplicity, the pumping of constables was a very fashionable amusement. The commander then proposed breaking open Newgate, and making a general jail delivery. The enterprise was attempted, but failed for want of cannon. Roe, who was the constable of the castle, and was well supplied with artillery, repulsed the assailants; and some townsmen, whose curiosity induced them to become spectators of this futile attempt, were killed in the action.

“ Goldsmith, though not a principal, was present at the transaction, and was publicly admonished for aiding and abetting the riot,—in the words of the sentence, *quod seditioni favisset et tumultuantibus opem tulisset.*”

In a portion of the juvenile correspondence of Edmund Burke lately discovered, and of which the writer has to regret he had not the use on a previous occasion, another account of this transaction appears, written by a fellow-student, afterwards the Rev. William Dennis, LL.D., Rector of Dunmore in the diocese of Tuam.\* This gentleman was, with a few youthful friends in college named Hamilton, Mohun, Buck, Brennan, and one or two more, a member of the debating society formed by Burke—private in its nature, and

\* To this was added that of Clare and Clonshambo, in the diocese of Kildare, through the interest of Burke. The correspondence is in the hands of his grandson, Mr. W. Crawford, now a member of the English Bar, and to whom I am indebted for the perusal of this and many more letters.

meant merely for their own amusement. Many of the exercises, amusements, friendships, and even letters of these youthful associates, seem from a large packet of correspondence still in existence, to have been in common; and their proceedings were communicated in joint letters to Richard Shackleton, son of their former schoolmaster at Ballitore, of which the following is one. The subjects discussed were usually literary—chiefly poetry, criticism, and the drama; and furnish evidence of what the writer has elsewhere advanced\*, that the mind of Burke was as active in degree in very early, as in later life. No apology will be necessary for giving the letter at length, although the latter part only relates to our subject; it is illustrative of the characteristics, perhaps the operations, of mind. We find here in juxtaposition the different occupations at the same university, at the same moment, and when nearly of the same age, of Burke and Goldsmith; the sedateness of pursuit, the industry and labour for self-improvement of the future statesman, contrasted with the inconsiderate love of frolic and careless jollity of the future poet; yet both destined to become distinguished ornaments of their country. The first part of the letter, though written by Burke, is not signed by him, this being left for Dennis, who was to conclude it, which he does with a mock heroic account of the riot, as indeed all their communications were

\* Life of Burke, 2d ed. vol. i. p. 15. and *passim*.

couched in a jocular vein. Shackleton's letters in return were likewise addressed to them in common.

“ May 28. 1747.

“ SCENE I.—BURKE, DENNIS.—*The Club-room.*  
—DENNIS *goes away about some Business.*—  
*Manet BURKE solus.*

“ As the committee appointed for the trial of Dennis has just now broke up without doing any thing, for want of members sufficient, I have time enough on my hands to write what you desire—an account of the proceedings of our society since your departure; in which you have been a perfect prophet, for Mohun was formally expelled last lustrum by the censor, Mr. Dennis. After an examination of his conduct from the first foundation of the society, it was found exceeding bad, without one virtue to redeem it, for which he suffered the above sentence. He was tried some time before (Burke, pres.) for his bad behaviour; but behaved still worse at trial, which brought fresh punishments on him, and at length expulsion. This is not the only revolution in our club. Mr. Buck's conduct much altered for the worse; we seldom see him, for which he has not been spared. Dennis, Hamilton, and your humble —— ha! ha! attend constantly; Cardegrif\*, as we expected, middling. You all this while are uneasy to know

\* A name given to one of the party, but to whom does not appear.

the cause of Dennis's accusation ; it is no less than an attempt to overturn this society, by an insolent behaviour to the president and society. I am the accuser ; and when you know that, you will tremble for him. I must congratulate you likewise on the censor's minor thanks, which you received with a declaration that had you entered earlier into the society you had been entitled to the grand thanks. The censor gave himself the grand thanks, and the same to me.

“ We had, during your absence, the following debates very well handled :—On the Stadtholder—Burke, an oration ; lenity to the rebels, a debate—Dennis for, Burke against ; Prince of Orange to harangue his troops—Dennis ; the sailors in a ship turning pirates—Dennis for, Burke and Hamilton against ; Catiline to the Allobroges—Dennis ; General Huske for engaging at Falkirk—Burke ; Hawley against Dennis ; Brutus the First to the Romans—Burke. Hamilton is now president, and a very good one. You use me oddly in your letter ; you accuse me of laziness, and what not (though I am likely to fill this *sheet*). I did not expect this from your friendship, that you should think I would, in your absence, refuse you my company for a few lines, when I attended you in town for many a mile. You behave to me just after the manner that a vile prologue I've read desires the audience to use the actors—‘ But if you damn, be it discreetly done ; flatter us here, and damn us when you're

gone' (you see I have not lost my faculty of quoting Grub Street); just so, when *here* you blarney me; in the country you abuse me; but that shall not hinder me from writing on, for (to show you my Latin) 'tenet insanabile multos scribendi cacoethes.' Come we now to Shar\*—the beginning is dark, indeed, but not quite void of connection, 'for whose good effects, &c.' connects with the first line; all the rest is, properly, between parenthesis. Phæton\* sells well still; tell me exactly what is said concerning his appearance in print in the country. Miss Cotter† is quite charmed with your writings, and more of them would not be disagreeable to that party. I have myself almost finished a piece—an odd one; but you shall not see it until it comes out, if ever: write the rest, Pantagrue, for I can stay no longer;—past nine.—I am now returned, and no Pantagrue. —Your oration on Poverty is, I think, very good, and has in some parts very handsome touches; you shall have the club's opinion next time, which was deferred till we should have a full house. I received your novel, and will read it (and peruse it?) carefully.

\* Juvenile productions, the nature of which does not appear. Shackleton and Burke communicated their writings to each other for mutual correction.

† Supposed to be the daughter of a bookseller, with whom these young writers were connected in their publications.



(*Continuation of the same Letter.*)

“Dublin, May 28, 1747.

“DEAR RICHARD, (SHACKLETON.)

“You may be surprised to see the date in the middle of a letter, but I have heard of your resentment at letters not being dated, and I must tell you, though I don't read news, or consult proposals for Grubean works, yet I know the day of the month as well as Burke, who does both, yet does not give an account of it. Now I have got so far upon that important matter of time (for we chronologists are very careful of it), I'll come to business; and, first, I have prosecuted Mohun (while a private member) with the utmost vigour, and when Censor expelled him; and now for my good services, I am threatened with expulsion by Burke, who is a terrible fellow, and is very active (at getting me punished) in the club, though I have hitherto shown myself a good member. I am now accused of a design of destroying the club (thus modern patriots urge every thing an introduction to popery and slavery which they don't like), when, alas! no one has a greater desire to preserve it; nay, so strong is it, that though I find in myself a strong desire to keep the chair when I get it, yet my regard for four or five members quells it. The approbation I met with in the character of Cato (*Censor*) has made me so much the more a stickler for liberty, that not bearing any encroachment on it in our assembly, I am deemed a criminal; and

what's worse, my accuser a violent one, and my judge the person whom I have injured; you see the justice.

*(Same Letter continued.)*

“ Friday morning, May 29, (1747.)

“ Burke is now writing the proceedings of the assembly, and just saying he'll pass over part of the debates because he is tired; you find he is semper eadem; as lazy as you imagined, though I must do him the justice to say he designed writing last night; what prevented it heretofore was our expectation of your first challenge, and likewise Ned (Burke) thought it preposterous to be threshing his brains for you when he is writing for the public; pray laugh heartily now lest you should split when you see the subject he has chosen and the manner he has treated it; but I will not anticipate your pleasure by acquainting you any more.

“ I wonder Ned (Burke) did not acquaint you with several important affairs which have happened in town, but I'll supply his place. Jupiter, perceiving the days devoted to him \* had passed equally disregarded with those of the other gods, was resolved to make it now more remarkable, for lo! a sudden fury seized the Trinitarians†; and with impetuous haste they poured through all the streets, in hopes to free a wight, by catchpole's powerful

\* Thursday—Die Jovis—the day of the riot.

† Members of Trinity College.

hand to durance hard conveyed. Sol, fearful of their swift approach, now \* \* \* was hastening to unyoke his steeds—sure most just it is to call him God of wisdom—for had he stayed, what might he not expect from those blades who with victorious arms had now overthrown the myrmidons of Dublin's mighty Lord. Now see the chance of war; the wight who erst in triumph led the hopeless victim to the prison vile, now fell himself a prey to those whose fury heretofore he'd braved; who with Joe as great as when Achilles caught old Priam's murdering son and with relentless fury tied him to his chariot, so they, with fury equal and no less relentless, forced the wretched captive to their own dominions, there spoiled him of his armour, and with force as when the great Hercules the fierce Antæus from the ground uprear'd, then plunged him in the horrid gulph for catchpoles vile prepared, where no kind nymph or dolphin huge, him bearing might relieve.\* Thus plunged in water and in grief, long time he lay. At length his arms uplifting, he implores their kind relief, which they in brief afford, and save the wretched captive from his fate,—but naked led him midst the admiring crowd, to the great building where the varied race of merchants, catchpoles, aldermen and duns, wh——, thieves, and judge fill up the noisy choir. Thus with many a shout victorious

\* Alluding to ducking the sheriff's officers in a great cistern then in the area of Trinity College, as punishment for presuming to arrest a student.

marched the glorious youth, till the dun night now warned them to retreat.

“ The remainder you must take in plain prose. The mob attempting to force the Black dog\*, the gaoler fired, killed two, and wounded others. Five scholars were expelled for the riot, and five more admonished : so ended an affair which made great noise in the city. Another man was killed since a fighting. Thus a former Thursday was remarkable ; and yesterday was signalized by the receipt of your letter and paper, which I like much, but wish you had wrote in quarto ; pray write the other so, and send it speedily. Brennan is well, and so is Garret†, who gives his service to you, Ned desires me to tell you the caps he will send by the next opportunity. Excuse the shortness of this, but I shall be more prolix in my next ; till when, believe me your sincere friend and humble servant,

“ WILLIAM DENNIS, or CATO

“ THE UNFORTUNATE.

“ Ned (Burke) got your letter first and keeps it to join with those he has of yours : he insists I have no right to it, though it was directed to me : pray settle that point in your next.—Adieu,

“ SI VALES VALEO.”

\* Newgate, it is presumed, from the previous statement of Dr. Wilson. It was then, as appears from other notices of this riot, a dilapidated and insecure building, which accounts for the students attempting to force it.

† Elder brother of Edmund Burke.

So flagrant a breach of University discipline as this riot proved, and the loss of life by which it was attended, called for the most serious inquiry and punishment. In consequence four of the ring-leaders, (not five, as stated in the preceding account,) were expelled, and four others something less guilty though prominent in the fray, among whom was Goldsmith, publicly admonished. Such a punishment though not slight at that time, would now preclude the offender from a degree. The following is the sentence passed on this occasion, after noticing the expulsion of the others :—

“ *Et cum constat insuper Oliverum Goldsmith (three other names are likewise mentioned), huic seditioni favisse et tumultuantibus opem tulisse visum et præposito et sociis senioribus prædictos Oliverum Goldsmith (cum aliis) publice admonere et hanc admonitionem in album Collegii referri.*”

To efface as much as possible the unfavourable impression made by this occurrence, as well as to add to his means of support, he appears to have exerted himself with some effect. In the month following the reprimand, June 15, 1747, he seems to have tried for a scholarship ; but, failing in this great object of ambition, was elected an exhibitor on the foundation of Erasmus Smyth ; a person who dying in 1669, left a large fortune to charitable uses under the management of the principal official personages in Ireland, and among other bequests, sums for two fellowships and thirty-five exhibitions in the University ; twenty being

of the larger, and fifteen of the smaller description. Goldsmith's was one of the latter; out of the nineteen elected on this occasion, his name stands seventeenth on the list; the emolument was trifling, being no more than about thirty shillings\* ; but the credit something, for it was the first distinction he had obtained in his college career. It seems, however, to have been but a short time enjoyed. In the September, December, and following March quarters, a cross appears against his name in the books, signifying either suspension or absence in the country, though the former is said to have been the reason; and in June, 1748, it is omitted altogether in the list of exhibitors. The cause is considered to have been an act of venial imprudence mentioned by his sister, and probably produced by joy for the recent honour he had received; so that its celebration would seem to have proved the occasion of its loss.

He had invited a party of young friends of both sexes from the city, to supper and a dance in his chambers, when his tutor hearing of the irregularity proceeded thither, addressed him in gross terms of abuse before his guests, and being probably irritated by the replies of the pupil, at length proceeded to the unwarrantable extremity of per-

\* Such would appear to have been the amount at that period, as the Rev. Dr. Sadleir, Librarian of the University, did me the favour to point out; but at present (1832) Erasmus Smyth's exhibitions are more valuable; twenty producing 8*l.*, and fifteen 6*l.* per annum.



sonal chastisement. The effect of this violence upon a sensitive mind like that of Goldsmith may be conceived : he thought himself irretrievably disgraced ; and with that “ exquisite sensibility of contempt,” of which he speaks on another occasion, determined to forsake not only the scene of his mortification, but his country ; and, unknown even to his friends, seek his fortune in a kinder region.

With this view, he disposed of his books and clothes and quitted the University, but loitered in Dublin until with no more than a shilling left, he set out for Cork. His intention was to embark there for some other country, he knew not whither. On this shilling he supported himself, as he affirmed, for three days ; and then parting by degrees with his clothes, was at length reduced to such extremity of famine, that after fasting twenty-four hours, he thought a handful of grey peas given him by a girl at a wake, the most comfortable repast he had ever made. Fatigue and privation produced what, perhaps, persuasion might not have effected, — conviction of his folly and imprudence. The project of going to America (for this seemed his destination) was therefore for the present abandoned ; his steps turned gradually homeward ; and when near enough to communicate with his brother, he sent forward a messenger to announce his situation ; and Henry, who immediately went to the assistance of the wanderer, clothed and carried him back to college, where something of a reconciliation was attempted with the tutor.

It is not to be supposed this was very cordial or permanent: he who descends to personal outrage upon a youth nearly of man's estate will scarcely forgive the object of his violence; nor will the latter look for a friend or instructor in one whom he must consider as a tyrant. These feelings, no doubt, operated in the minds of both: the pupil became despondent, and if not sulky, indifferent probably to applause or censure; while the tutor, irritated by what he deemed neglect or dislike, persecuted him, as we learn from Dr. Wilson and others, at the quarterly examinations by sarcastic taunts or ironical praises, galling in the extreme to a youth of sensibility. One of the scenes to which this mutual aversion gave rise was related by his friend Mr. Beatty, a witness on the occasion; and it is characteristic of others which occurred in the public intercourse of the tutor not with one only but several of his pupils.

While lecturing his class in the spring of 1748, he desired Goldsmith to explain the centre of gravity, which however he was unable to do. The former then went through a formal explanation, and when he had finished, sternly called out, "Now, blockhead, where is *your* centre of gravity?" Annoyed by the terms of the reproof, and probably desirous of indulging his humour at the expense of the lecturer's dignity, Oliver in his usual slow, hollow tone of enunciation, after the preface of "Why, doctor, by your definition, I think it must be somewhere——" added a term too coarse for repetition.

This totally discomposed the gravity of all the auditors, and excited not unreasonably the anger of their instructor, who, after a severe rebuke for ignorance and impertinence, turned him down to the bottom of the class. This anecdote, which was often told in conversation to Bishop Percy, is confirmed by a memorandum recently discovered by the writer in the senior lecturer's book under the date of May 9th, 1748 ; where it is briefly recorded, "Goldsmith turned down."

The other memoranda relating to him in the University books are few : twice he is "cautioned" for neglecting Greek lecture, and thrice commended for diligence in attending it, or in the phrase used on such occasions, "receives the thanks of the house." In the buttery books the fines against him are numerous, though not more so than are affixed to the names of many others, and all very trifling in amount ; his general conduct therefore, does not seem to have been marked, in the opinion of the high college authority who obligingly rendered his aid in the search for these particulars, by any unusual irregularity. He was said by Dr. Michael Kearney, a contemporary during the last year of residence, and afterwards fellow of the college, to have gained a premium at a Christmas examination ; which being more strict than others, is considered the most honourable of any given during the year. But, after a diligent examination, no trace of this honour is to be found ; the fact, nevertheless, may have been as stated ; for the Doc-

tor was considered good authority, and some of the records of that period are mislaid. The probable year was 1748; for in the preceding Christmas quarter his exhibition, as we have seen, was suspended, and in that of 1746 he had been cautioned on the subject of Greek lecture.

The records which supply these notices, slight though not uninteresting in their details, furnish evidence of the diligence and success which attended his friend Beatty; who in mentioning the misadventures of the poet, seldom adverted to his own merits or distinctions obtained when a fellow student. These appear to have been numerous; his name is constantly to be found among those commended for diligence; he receives a premium when poor Goldsmith is "turned down;" and certificates, considered as substitutes for other premiums, were awarded on other occasions. Yet, how capricious are the ultimate distributions of fame! Beatty thus commended and successful, entered into the church, encountered no material difficulties in life, found his sphere, perhaps, circumscribed by the useful though unostentatious duties of a parish priest, and though always known as a clever man, found no inducement to come before the world as a candidate for further distinction. While Goldsmith, sometimes idle, sometimes neglected or noticed only to be censured, pursuing, it may be said, no certain calling, a wanderer for no inconsiderable portion of his life, friendless and long obscure, living in difficulties and dying in

them, has left a reputation which promises to be unfading. Contrasts of this kind have given rise to the common though inconsiderate censure applied to colleges, for not better discriminating the characters of youth; as if discrimination were at such time practicable to any sagacity. Besides, circumstances so continually modify or even create talent, that all the practical conclusion we can draw is, not hastily to attempt to gauge the exact dimensions of youthful intellect.

When free from the influence of indolence or despondency, and no longer seen "lounging about the college gate," in the words of a contemporary, (Dr. Wolfen), he seems not to have neglected a talent for poetry. Instances of this appear to have been remembered by that gentleman and others; being partly original compositions of a light description, or translations from the classics: these, like other college exercises, when not preserved by the parties themselves, interested no one else, and were forgotten with the occasion. In allusion to this poetical talent, and when the fact would have been readily known by inquiry, he many years afterwards told Mr. Malone in London, when conversing about the University, that "though he made no great figure in mathematics, which was a study much in repute there, he could turn an ode of Horace into English better than any of them." To this date is assigned the translation from Macrobius, which appeared in the first edition (1759) of the Enquiry into Polite Learning in Europe. It

is likewise believed that at this time was sketched the tale of the "Double Transformation," which appears in his works, commencing, —

" Secluded from domestic strife,  
Jack Bookworm led a college life :  
A fellowship at twenty-five  
Made him the happiest man alive.  
He drank his glass, and crack'd his joke,  
And freshmen wondered as he spoke."

For in the original draught the following allusion, afterwards omitted, occurs to the adventure for which he received the public admonition—

" And told the tales oft told before,  
*Of bailiffs pump'd and proctors bit,*  
At college how he show'd his wit.

At the period of quitting college and selling his books in consequence of the tutor's assault upon him, his Greek Lexicon, no doubt as being of some value, was among the number. This volume, Scapula's folio, the writer has every reason to believe is now in his possession ; the gift of a lady whose scholarship is among the least of her merits, whose piety is as unfeigned as her philanthropy is extensive, and in whom the unostentatious charities of Dublin find one of their most persevering and zealous supporters.\* By the account of this

\* Miss K——, whose name the writer would have pleasure in giving at length, were he not apprehensive of offending that female reserve which frequently renders us unable to bestow by name due praise on the greatest benefactors of our species.



lady it appears that, when in search of a lexicon several years ago, she met with it on the stall of an illiterate bookseller, who however placed some additional value on the volume from the autographs of the Poet, of which there are more than a dozen scattered in the margins, and bearing every mark of being his handwriting. Some are simply his name ; others in imitation of the then style of franking are marked "Free, Oliver Goldsmith ;" one or two containing certain promises more familiar to him than that of the assumed parliamentary privilege, namely, "*I promise to pay, &c. &c.,* Oliver Goldsmith ;" all indicative of what we may conceive to have been his employment in an idle or musing mood. Few details of the history of this volume could be given at the time of the purchase, and even these are forgotten, excepting that it had passed through one or two other hands ; the title page is wanting, and it bears traces of very venerable age. From the expensive nature of the work, it had probably been the gift of his uncle Goldsmith, and used by him when in the same retreat of learning.

The poor are commonly said to be improvident ; and Goldsmith by all accounts, failed to manage his scanty finances with the care that his necessities required ; an imprudent benevolence as it would seem to distressed objects proving the cause of serious inconvenience to himself. Illustrative of this point of character, Mr. Edward Mills of Mount Prospect in Roscommon, his relative, and who

entered the college about two years after him, told a ludicrous story which, though obviously exaggerated, may have had some foundation in truth ; he was a professed wit and a punster, and therefore the anecdote probably lost nothing in the narration ; it may likewise owe something to the whim of the Poet, whose humour was sometimes sufficiently broad and practical.

Mills, whose family in Roscommon was opulent, possessing a handsome allowance at the University, occasionally furnished his relative with small supplies and frequently invited him to breakfast. On being summoned on one occasion to this repast, he declared from within to the messenger his inability to rise, and that to enable him to do so they must come to his assistance, by forcing open the door. This was accordingly done by Mills ; who found his cousin not *on* his bed, but literally *in* it, having ripped part of the ticking and immersed himself in the feathers, from which situation, as alleged, he found difficulty in extricating himself. By his own account in explanation of this strange scene, after the merriment which it occasioned had subsided, it appeared that while strolling in the suburbs the preceding evening, he met a poor woman with five children, who told a pitiful story of her husband being in the hospital, and herself and offspring destitute of food, and of a place of shelter for the night ; and that being from the country, they knew no person to whom under such circumstances they could apply with hope of relief. The appeal to one of

his sensitive disposition was irresistible ; but unfortunately he had no money. In this situation he brought her to the college gate, sent out his blankets to cover the wretched group, and part of his clothes in order to sell for their present subsistence ; and finding himself cold during the night from want of the usual covering, had hit upon the expedient just related for supplying the place of his blankets.

The substance of this story will scarcely be thought improbable, when we know that on several occasions in future life he reduced himself, from similar motives, to equal inconvenience ; though he saw and felt and had resolution to stigmatize his imprudence at the very moment he was guilty of it. His justice through life seems to have maintained a constant though ineffectual contest with his generosity ; none could read more impressive lessons on prudence, or practise them less even against his own conviction. “ Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind,” he writes to his brother in 1759, “ are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear Sir, to your son thrift and economy : let his poor wandering uncle’s example be placed before his eyes.” Much more in the same strain will be found in a subsequent letter.

“ Misers,” he says in an essay written in the same year, when it will be seen that he had suffered from the neglect of his own maxims, “ are

generally characterized as men without honour or without humanity, who live only to accumulate, and to this passion sacrifice every other happiness. They have been described as madmen, who, in the midst of abundance, banish every pleasure, and make from imaginary wants real necessities. But few, very few, correspond to this exaggerated picture; and perhaps there is not one in whom all these circumstances are united. Instead of this, we find the sober and industrious branded by the vain and the idle with this odious appellation; men who, by frugality and labour, raise themselves above their equals, and contribute their share of industry to the common stock.”\*

Full of the subject, he returns to it in another paper of the Bee; and the exhortations are so earnest as to impress the belief of the most consummate prudence in him who could state its advantages so eloquently:

“The ancient Romans, more rational than we in this particular (their estimation of frugality), were very far from misplacing their admiration or praise: instead of regarding the practice of parsimony as low or vicious, they made it synonymous even with probity. They esteemed those virtues so inseparable, that the known expression of *Vir Frugi* signified at one and the same time, a sober and managing man, an honest man, and a man of substance.” Not yet satisfied with admonitions, meant

\* See Works, vol. i., Bee, No. III.

† Ibid. No. V.

to impress his convictions in the strongest manner, he recurs a fourth time to the same theme, which seems at this period to have possessed his mind in the spirit of determined economy ; but it is not necessary to quote his sentiments at length here. Were not principle and practice constantly seen at variance in the conduct of the wisest men, it would be difficult to conceive how such a man could be improvident.

On the 27th of February, 1749, he was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Mr. Malone first ascertained the date from the communication of Dr. Wilson ; but on subsequent search being made, the official document could not be found : doubts were consequently entertained of the accuracy of the statement, and belief generally expressed that he had never taken a degree at all ; though it now appears without cause.

His name was first found by the present writer in the list of such as had right of access to the college library, to which by the rules graduates only are admissible, and who previous to admission write their names in a volume kept for that purpose. Pursuing the inquiry, by permission of the college authorities, he was shown by the Rev. Dr. Phibbs, the registrar, the original record ; where in this his final connection with the University, his name appears last upon the list of those who acquired a similar degree on the same day, as it is last in the list of sizers on the day of entering it.\*

\* At that period the names were often written by the librarian ; and the Rev. Dr. Sadlier, who now fills that office, and did

Misled by hasty examination of the records, Dr. Wilson, in the communication to Malone already mentioned, concluded that the degree had been obtained two years after the regular time ; but this is likewise a mistake. On reference to dates it will be found that his period of residence was no more than four years ; and on further inquiry of the heads of the University, they agreed that he had been admitted in due course.

The attainment of this distinction, all that he now expected or sought from his college, caused a speedy return to the country,—not indisposed to quit a scene of which the mortifications, in his estimate, counterbalanced some of the advantages. His career while there was considered at home a failure ; his father had lived to witness only a partial frustration of his hopes ; and although Mr. Contarine, as his daughter Mrs. Lawder very well remembered, still formed a good opinion of his talents, it was otherwise with many of his nearest connections, who from the straitened circumstances of his mother, left nearly destitute herself, found their generosity occasionally taxed for his support. To this feeling there is obvious allusion, as Mrs. Hodson acknowledged, in one of the papers in the “*Citizen of the World*,” where, under the character of the Man in Black, he adverts, with characteristic

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me the favour to assist in the search, believes that the name is not an autograph, but, from similarity to others, written by his predecessor of that day.



love of family history, to this period of his life, and to his distaste for mathematics :

“ The first opportunity he (his father) had of finding his expectations disappointed, was in the middling figure I made at the University : he had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having over-rated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings, at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects, than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This however did not please my tutors, who observed indeed that I was a little dull ; but at the same time allowed, that I seemed to be very *good-natured*, and had no harm in me.” \*

To this very amiable father, the son, by his power in the delineation of character, has given celebrity in three of his sketches ; one in the paper just quoted ; a second in Dr. Primrose, in the “ Vicar of Wakefield ;” and a third as the family always stated, in reference to his spiritual character, in the Preacher in the “ Deserted Village.” Each has peculiarities that distinguish it from the other, yet touched so skilfully, that with some variation, they cannot be said to offer a contradiction. By traditional notices gleaned from his descendants and in the neighbourhood, before all who had known him personally had passed away, he appears to have

\* Letter xxvii. See Works, vol. ii.

been one of that numerous class in Ireland who, with very warm hearts, want counterbalancing discretion to keep within the rules of necessary prudence; who are benevolent as much from impulse as principle; hospitable sometimes at the expense of their families; and prone from this national propensity or weakness, to prize the reputation of generosity above more thriving virtues. He was learned, sincere, of simple manners, but possessed of little knowledge of the world beyond the sphere of his calling and the rural affairs of the vicinity; and to a deception practised upon him at the fair of Athlone, in some unthrifty bargain, is ascribed the origin of the story of Moses and the green spectacles.

Inattention to worldly matters, a certain eccentricity of character, and inability to get forward in life, seem to have characterised the Goldsmith race; for in conversing with three of its branches, in as many different quarters of Ireland, the remark of each ran in nearly the same words:—"The Goldsmiths were always a strange family; they rarely acted like other people: their hearts were always in the right place, but their heads seemed to be doing anything but what they ought." A competent authority, resident in the neighbourhood, made a similar observation, when communicating some traditional notices of the poet twenty-five years ago; and the remark is said to hold good to the present time:—"Several of the family and name," writes this gentleman, "live near Elphin, who as well as the Poet, were and are remarkable for their

worth, but of no cleverness in the affairs of the world.”\*

In the sketch of his father, in the history of the “Man in Black,” it will be observed how tenderly the son touches upon the parental or family failing of improvidence, which is made almost to “lean to Virtue’s side;” and in writing it, he probably meant to apologise for that disregard of the maxims of prudence in himself, arising from an overflow of benevolence, which we may thus be induced to believe had its origin in paternal example :—

“ My father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers still poorer than himself: for every dinner he gave them, they returned him an equivalent in praise; and this was all he wanted. The same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of his army, influenced my father at the head of his table: he told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laughed at; he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taffy in the sedan-chair was sure to set the table in a roar. Thus his pleasure increased in proportion to the

\* The Rev. Dr. Streat; in an “Essay on Light Reading,” by the Rev. Ed. Mangin. This intelligent clergyman furnished several suggestions likewise to the writer, for which he is obliged. The name of Goldsmith is now, as is said by some of its branches, extinct in that neighbourhood, Elphin, but several relatives by the female branches remain.

pleasure he gave ; he loved all the world ; and he fancied all the world loved him.

“ As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it : he had no intention of leaving his children money, for that was dross ; he was resolved they should have learning, for learning he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose he undertook to instruct us himself, and took as much care to form our morals as to improve our understanding. We were told that universal benevolence was what first cemented society ; we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own ; to regard the *human face divine* with affection and esteem ; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress. In a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of getting a farthing.”

However disposed to quit the University, Oliver found little to allure him to the country ; the pecuniary circumstances of his nearest connections enabling them to do little more than afford him a temporary home. Mr. and Mrs. Hodson lived in the house at Lissoy after the death of his father. His mother remained there also for a time ; but removing soon afterwards to Ballymahon, occupied a small house, (still an object of interest to visitors, forming one corner of the road to Edgworthstown,) and survived about twenty years, as would appear, in very

confined circumstances.\* Henry, the clergyman, who served the curacy of his late father's parish and whose school was at this period limited, lived at the original family residence of Pallas; as appears by the copy of a deed in the Registry of Dublin, stating "that the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, Clerk, of Pallismore in the County of Longford, as eldest son and heir-at-law of the late Charles Goldsmith, confirms to Daniel Hodson the lands assigned to him by his late father, in lieu of the marriage portion with his daughter Catherine." It bears date December 13th and 14th, 1750.

For about two years, according to the verbal account given by Mrs. Hodson to the Rev. Mr. Hand-

\* My friend, the Rev. Mr. Graham, supplies the following note, first printed in Mr. Shaw Mason's "Statistical Survey:"

"The writer of this account purchased some old papers several years ago, at an auction at Ballymahon, and among them an account-book, kept by a Mrs. Edwards and a Miss Shore, who lived in the next house to Mrs. Goldsmith. In this village record were several shop accounts, from the year 1740 to 1756. Some of the entries, in the earliest of these accounts, ran thus:—'Tea, by Master Noll'—'Cash by ditto'—from which it appears, that Oliver was his mother's principal messenger. One of the accounts, in 1756, may be considered a curiosity, ascertaining the use and the price of green tea in this part of the country nearly eighty years ago.

"Mrs. Goldsmith to Sarah Shore, Dr.

Brought forward	-	-	-	-	0	15	5
Jan. 16. Half an ounce of green tea	-	-	-	-	0	0	3½
A quarter of a pound of lump sugar	-	-	-	-	0	0	3½
A pound of Jamaica sugar	-	-	-	-	0	0	8
An ounce of green tea	-	-	-	-	0	0	7
Half a pound of rice	-	-	-	-	0	0	2
A quarter of an ounce of green tea	-	-	-	-	0	0	2"

cock in 1790, the future poet “having no fixed object in view, continued visiting about among his friends,” which may have tended to render habits naturally careless, still more unsettled and irregular. Occasionally he is said to have assisted his brother in his school, the only return in his power to make for unintermitted protection and friendship; but to one of his temperament, an effort of no ordinary resolution. To this first initiation into the drudgery of teaching, was probably owing that disgust to the exercise of a profession honourable in itself, which he ever afterwards felt and hesitated not to avow, although compelled to resort to it as the means of subsistence when thrown upon his own resources. At Lissoy he likewise spent a considerable portion of time, entering into the rural sports and occupations of his brother-in-law with the usual ardour of a young and unoccupied mind. Through life he preserved the fondest attachment to this spot; often revisiting it, as he said, in imagination, although restrained by circumstances he could not control, from realising in person what memory delighted to retrace; and indeed a man of warm affections looks back upon few things with more satisfaction than the scenes and the friends of his youth. One of his subsequent letters enters strongly into these feelings: he remembers his acquaintance and country, he says, with the strongest affection,—yet stops to ask why this is,—when from the one he experienced no more than common civility, and from the other brought nothing away but his brogue and



his blunders? On the same occasion he alludes, in a strain of fond recollection, to the scenery around Lissoy, presenting, he warmly says, "the most pleasing horizon in nature."

Under the influence of similar feelings and nearly in the same language as in these letters, he commences one of his Essays; the locality though not expressly named, will be immediately obvious to the reader:—

"When I reflect on the unambitious retirement in which I passed the earlier part of my life in the country, I cannot avoid feeling some pain in thinking that those happy days are never to return. In that retreat all nature seemed capable of affording pleasure: I then made no refinements on happiness, but could be pleased with the most awkward efforts of rustic mirth; thought cross-purposes the highest stretch of human wit; and questions and commands the most rational way of spending the evening. Happy could so charming an illusion still continue! I find that age and knowledge only contribute to sour our dispositions. My present enjoyments may be more refined, but they are infinitely less pleasing. The pleasure the best actor gives can no way compare to that I have received from a country wag who imitated a quaker's sermon. The music of the finest singer is dissonance to what I felt when our old dairy-maid sung me into tears with Johnny Armstrong's last Good Night, or the cruelty of Barbara Allen."\*

\* See Works, vol. i. Bee, No. II.

In conversation he has been known to refer to this spot with something of pride as his family residence ; and in his writings, on more than one occasion, felt pleasure in recalling a scene where his father had fed the hungry, and sometimes lodged the houseless. The “Deserted Village” points to the exertion of this benevolence in several points of view ; while the “Vicar of Wakefield,” in describing his abode and the inmates to whom it formed an occasional home, is made to advert to it in others ; the resort of idle and poor relatives, or to those who claim to be such, to families raised a little above them in condition, will be familiar to all acquainted with Ireland, in the following sketch :—

“As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry wine, for which we had great reputation ; and I profess, with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them to find fault with it. Our cousins, too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity without the help of the herald’s office, and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honour by these claims of kindred ; as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt amongst the number. However, my wife always insisted that, as they were the same *flesh and blood*, they should sit with us at the same table. So that if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us ; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer

the guest the better pleased he ever is with being treated ; and as some men gaze with admiration at the colours of a tulip, or the wing of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy faces.

“ However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house I ever took care to lend him a riding coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes a horse of small value ; and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like ; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveller or the poor dependant out of doors.”\*

\* See Works, vol. iii. Vicar of Wakefield, chap. i.

## CHAP. IV.

DECLINES TO TAKE ORDERS.—BALLYMAHON.—ACCEPTS A TUTORSHIP.—TRAVELS TO CORK.—REPUTED POETICAL ATTEMPTS.—ADOPTS THE PROFESSION OF PHYSIC.—EDINBURGH.—MR. LACHLAN MACLEANE.

GOLDSMITH's family, desirous of securing a respectable profession as well as provision for one without either, wished him to take orders under the belief that they could advance him in the church ; but to this he felt a settled repugnance. " For the clerical profession," said Mrs. Hodson, " he had no liking ; having always a strong inclination for visiting foreign countries."

The real motives, judging from sentiments expressed in future life, and which he probably did not now think proper to disclose, appear to have been conscientious conviction of being unfitted by temperament for the sacred office, and a consequent dislike to undertake the performance of duties which he knew he wanted the requisite inclination to fulfil. All men, even such as are estimable in many respects, are not necessarily fitted for clergymen ; they should be naturally disposed toward the calling, and not the calling made matter of convenience to their families or to themselves. So high an opinion had he formed of the purity of conduct necessary to such as attempted to admonish or

to instruct their fellows from the sacred volume, that at a late period of life, as will be hereafter seen, when even requested to read prayers in a private family, he declined with the remark, "that he did not deem himself good enough."

At length, induced by the persuasions of Mr. Contarine, whom it would have been ingratitude to disobey, he presented himself before the Bishop of Elphin, Dr. Synge, for ordination, and by the account of his sister, was rejected on the plea of being too young. The tradition in the diocese is, that he had neglected the proper professional studies, and that an exaggerated statement had reached the Bishop of his irregularities at College; while Dr. Streatalludes to a rumour, not at all improbable from his thoughtlessness and reputed love of gay dress, of some prejudice being formed against him from appearing before the Bishop in scarlet breeches. Whatever was the cause of rejection, he does not seem to have made a second attempt; the first he probably supposed enough to satisfy his friends; and the result did not displease himself, in escaping from what he considered the restraints of a clerical life. One of these restraints, frivolous no doubt and boyish as he afterwards considered it, was dislike to the usual dress of the profession; and in the paper already mentioned in the "Citizen of the World," it is thus alluded to:—

"After I had resided at college seven years, my father died and left me——his blessing. Thus shoved from shore, without ill-nature to protect, or

cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at twenty-two. But, in order to settle in life, my friends *advised* (for they always advise, when they begin to despise us), they advised me, I say, to go into orders.

“To be obliged to wear a long wig when I liked a short one, or a black coat when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty, that I absolutely rejected the proposal. A priest in England is not the same mortified creature with a bonze in China. \* \* I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration than that boyish one of dress. So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone; and yet they thought it a pity, for one that had not the least harm in him, and was so very *good-natured*.”

The vicinity of Ballymahon to his usual places of residence carried him frequently thither, to enjoy such society as a small town in a rude district of country afforded. The province of Connaught and its borders have been always considered, even in Ireland, backward and unpromising; the land in many places for miles together, sterile; cultivation, where it exists, imperfect; the houses of the gentry fewer in number and more widely scattered than in the other provinces; and the people less advanced in the arts, comforts, and knowledge of civilized life. There was at the period in question, still more traces of Celtic manners and peculiarities



among them than at present : much simplicity, hospitality, and pride, mingled with habits of a ruder kind, little intercourse with strangers, defective education, and little appreciation of the advantages of literature. He adverts to the state of society as he found it, in one of his letters : inquiring why “ he should be fond of a spot where the country is not fine and the company not good ; where vivacity is supported by some humble cousin who has just folly enough to earn his dinner ; and where more money has been spent in the encouragement of the Padareen mare\* (a celebrated racer of that day) in one season, than given in rewards to learned men since the times of Usher.”

In society thus characterised, and although mingling with it, despised, he is said to have indulged in the usual propensities of a young man of lively imagination, but destitute of the consideration necessary to guide him in the business of life. Conscious of the possession of superior talents, of which, it is said, occasional proofs were given, and ambitious of being at the head of his company, his companions very willingly tendered their admiration in return for his efforts to please. “ George Conway’s Inn,” mentioned in one of his letters, which stood and still stands,

\* In ridiculing national characteristics, in supposed extracts from a newspaper (*Citizen of the World*, Letter V.), he again alludes to the same topic. “ Dublin.—We hear that there is a benevolent subscription on foot among the nobility and gentry of this kingdom, who are great patrons of merit, in order to assist Black and all Black in his contest with the Padareen mare.”

though shorn of its honours by rival establishments, opposite the residence of his mother, had more of his time than his brother thought becoming or prudent. Without being seriously open to the charge of dissipation, the attractions of a convivial evening were strong enough to draw him from more sober pursuits. This inn formed the scene of some of his triumphs over more unlettered opponents: here he delighted to argue, to exhibit his classical attainments and general learning, to quote verses and occasionally to write them; and when these ceased to be attractive, he found equal pleasure in amusing his party by telling a story or singing a song. He seems to have been naturally, as he says of one of his characters, "an admirer of happy human faces," and with this gay and joyous spirit, so long as he saw the effect, did not much study the means by which it was produced. All this, though it did not corrupt his heart, tended to deteriorate his manners. It imparted that tinge of what afterwards, in the societies of London, some rather harshly termed uncouthness, but which might have been more appropriately named rusticity. It possibly fostered that passion for applause also laid to his charge in future life, yet inseparable from a man of talents; and no doubt tended to impair habits of order, regularity, and steady application. From some of the scenes in which he mingled in Ballymahon and its vicinity, and the peculiar circumstances of his life for some years afterwards, often cast into society which he felt to be far beneath

him, it is believed he drew the first idea of Tony Lumpkin ; leaving much necessarily to be filled up by comic exaggeration and invention. Yet such scenes could not be without their use to so good a painter of humour and character ; to profit by them is the province of genius ; and in one of his prefaces we are expressly told that “in pursuing humour it will sometimes lead us into the recesses of the mean.”

There is reason to believe that at this time he followed no systematic plan of study. Traditional accounts represent his favourite and almost constant reading to have been of the miscellaneous and amusing kind ; chiefly biography, travels, poetry, novels, and plays ; Eastern adventures and fictions took strong hold of his imagination, and were supposed by his family to have occasioned in part, the desire long entertained but never gratified of visiting those countries in person. But our own fictitious and romantic narratives became one of his chief sources of interest, first impressing, as he confessed afterwards with strong regret, as if more than ordinarily pernicious, erroneous ideas of life ; a common occurrence in youthful minds of every description, and with such as are most ingenious the most. It is perhaps but a natural result, that none should be more alive to such impressions than those who possess and are fated to exercise the power of producing them in others.

“Above all things,” he writes to his brother, some years afterwards, regarding the education of

his son, "let him never touch a romance or a novel ; those paint beauty in colours more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss !"

The respectable families in Ballymahon were not numerous. One of these, in which he spent many agreeable hours and by whom he was remembered with affectionate interest, was that of Mr. Robert Bryanton, his companion in school and in college\*, now an associate in his pleasures, and to whom he afterwards addressed several letters when absent from Ireland, disclosing his situation and prospects with even less reserve than to his own family. Two only of these remain in possession of the descendants of that gentleman ; they breathe the warmest regard for him and his relatives ; and in the postscript to one he even adds, after expressing attachment to its members—"If there be a favourite dog in the family, let me be remembered to him."

In company with this gentleman, besides their convivial scenes to which slight allusion is made in the same letter, he made frequent excursions on foot through the country ; sometimes for the purpose of shooting, sometimes to fish in the course of the river Inny, which flows through the town,

\* "1746 Novembris 18°.—*Robertus Bryanton Pens.—Filius Ricardi Gener.—Annum agens 15—Natus in Comitatu Longford :—Educatus sub ferula Mr. Hynes (Hughes)—Tutor Mr. Wilder.*" *College Register.*

and with a few green islets and the ruins of a mill, then in full activity, presents a pretty picturesque scene. Ballymulvey, an agreeable house and grounds in the vicinity and afterwards the residence for some years of his friend Bryanton, was a frequent resort. Here, by the river side, he is said to have amused himself with his flute; and here likewise and in the neighbouring pieces of water communicating with the Shannon, as well as in the course of that river, sometimes joined or led an otter hunt; for (speaking of that animal) he says in *Animated Nature*, "With us, its young are never found till the latter end of summer; and I have frequently, when a boy, discovered their retreats and hunted them at that season." In this vicinity also at the house of a gentleman named Gannon, he gained his only actual acquaintance with the seal tribe as mentioned in the same work—"How long this animal lives is unknown: a gentleman whom I knew in Ireland kept two of them, which he had taken very young, in his house for ten years; and they appeared to have the marks of age at the time I saw them, for they were grown grey about the muzzle." One of the rustic exercises pursued by him as a source of amusement was throwing the sledge, a common feat of strength and activity in Ireland; and a blacksmith who boasted to the Rev. Mr. Handcock of having taught him the art, still survived about the year 1787.

His uncle Contarine, to whom he paid fre-

quent visits in Roscommon, at length procured him the situation of tutor in the family of a gentleman in that county, whose name, as communicated by Mrs. Hodson to Mr. Handcock though not to Bishop Percy, was Flinn. In what light he considered himself here, whether in the character of tutor or flatterer, is doubtful; for either to this period, or to a visit paid as tradition reports to his relative, Dr. Goldsmith, Dean of Cloyne, he is supposed to allude in the following passage from the story of the Man in Black. If the visit to the Dean ever really took place, it was, we are certain, unsatisfactory to him; but that some circumstance of this kind had made a strong impression on his mind, appears from a similar notice in the story of George Primrose, and again in allusion to the situation of Thornhill after his disgrace, in the same tale:—

“Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man. At first I was surprised that the situation of a flatterer at a great man’s table could be thought disagreeable; there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. This even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, that his lordship was a greater dunce than myself; and from that very moment flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right, than at receiving his absurdities with submission. To flatter those we do not know



is an easy task ; but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eye, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise, my falsehood went to my conscience. His lordship soon perceived me to be very unfit for service ; I was therefore discharged ; my patron at the same time being graciously pleased to observe, that he believed I was tolerably good natured, and had not the least harm in me."

In the family of Mr. Flinn he remained about a year, and becoming tired of the confinement consequent on the situation, quitted it with the determination to go abroad. Such was Mrs. Hodson's account to Bishop Percy. Her verbal statement to the Rev. Mr. Handcock, in 1790, attributes his immediate removal to an altercation with one of the family, in consequence of sitting down to cards on the receipt of his salary, and by a train of ill luck, or as he did not hesitate to say by unfair play, losing the sum that had been paid him. Securing, however, according to her account, though it does not appear from what quarter, about thirty pounds and a good horse, he quitted the country, none of his family knew whither.

At the end of six weeks he unexpectedly returned, destitute of money or the horse on which he set out, but provided with an inferior animal facetiously denominated by him Fiddleback. In reply to the anxious inquiries of his friends, he

gave the following account of his adventures; first verbally, and then in a letter to his mother, who had expressed some doubts of its truth, and to whom he said with characteristic simplicity on observing her coolness, "And now, my dear mother, after having struggled so hard to come home to you, I wonder you are not more rejoiced to see me."

The original of this letter is not to be found; but a copy seems to have been in the possession of Mrs. Hodson, who communicated the material facts in the memoranda furnished of the early portion of her brother's life. It is now in the possession of the gentleman who holds the original manuscript memoir, and was probably sent by her at a subsequent period.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"If you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall be fully resolved in every one of those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork and converted my horse, which you prize so much higher than Fiddleback, into cash, took my passage in a ship bound for America, and, at the same time, paid the captain for my freight and all the other expenses of my voyage. But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks; and you know, mother, that I could not command the elements. My misfortune was that when the wind served I happened to be with a party in the country, and my friend the captain

never inquired after me, but set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing every thing curious, and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

“Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began to think of my dear mother and friends whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast Fiddleback and bade adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This to be sure was but a scanty allowance for man and horse towards a journey of above an hundred miles ; but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

“I recollected particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight miles from Cork.\* This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with particular emphasis.—‘We shall,’ says he, ‘enjoy the delights of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse.’

“However upon the way I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only

\* Almost the exact distance of Cloyne ; but had this been the reported visit to the Dean, we should probably have had a more distinct clue to the fact.

support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend's house, and therefore parted with a moiety of all my store ; and pray, mother, ought I not to have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her ?— However I soon arrived at the mansion of my affectionate friend, guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me and would have torn me to pieces, but for the assistance of a woman whose countenance was not less grim than that of the dog ; yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

“ Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a severe fit of sickness, came down in his night-cap, night-gown and slippers, and embraced me with the most cordial welcome, showed me in, and after giving me a history of his indisposition, assured me that he considered himself as peculiarly fortunate in having under his roof the man he most loved on the earth, and whose stay with him must, above all things, contribute to perfect his recovery. I now repented sorely I had not given the poor woman the other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of humanity would be punctually answered by this worthy man. I revealed to him my whole soul ; I opened to him all my distresses ; and freely owned that I had but one half-crown in my pocket, but that now, like a ship after weathering out the storm, I considered myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbour. He

made no answer, but walked about the room, rubbing his hands, as one in deep study. This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of a tender heart, which increased my esteem for him, and as that increased I gave the most favourable interpretation to his silence. I construed it into a delicacy of sentiment, as if he dreaded to wound my pride by expressing his commiseration in words, leaving his generous conduct to speak for itself.

“It now approached six o’clock in the evening, and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room, with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth, which she laid upon the table. This appearance, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small porringer of sour milk, a loaf of stale brown bread, and the heel of an old cheese all over crawling with mites. My friend apologised that his illness obliged him to live on slops, and that better fare was not in the house; observing at the same time that a milk diet was certainly the most healthful; and at eight o’clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would *lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark*. My hunger was at this time so exceedingly sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf, but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

“The lenten entertainment I had received made

me resolve to depart as soon as possible ; accordingly next morning, when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution ; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. ‘To be sure,’ said he, ‘the longer you stay away from your mother, the more you will grieve her and your other friends ; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made.’ Notwithstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress, and asking ‘how he thought I could travel above an hundred miles upon one half-crown?’ I begged to borrow a single guinea, which I assured him should be repaid with thanks. ‘And you know, Sir,’ said I, ‘it is no more than I have often done for you.’ To which he firmly answered, ‘Why look you, Mr. Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there. I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of a conveyance for you ; sell your horse and I will furnish you a much better one to ride on.’ I readily grasped at his proposal, and begged to see the nag, on which he led me to his bedchamber, and from under the bed he pulled out a stout oak stick. ‘Here he is,’ said he, ‘take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother’s with more safety than such a horse as you ride.’ I was in doubt when I got it into my hand whether I should not, in the first place, apply it to his pate ; but a rap at the street



door made the wretch fly to it, and when I returned to the parlour, he introduced me, as if nothing of the kind had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr. Goldsmith, his most ingenious and worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with rapture. I could scarcely compose myself; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a counsellor at law in the neighbourhood, a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

“ After spending an hour he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no further communication with my old hospitable friend; but at the solicitation of both I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives; one, that I was prejudiced in favour of the looks and manner of the counsellor; and the other, that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there indeed I found every thing that I could wish, abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation. In the evening when my old friend, who had eaten very plentifully at his neighbour's table, but talked again of lying down with the lamb, made a motion to me for retiring, our generous host requested I should take a bed with him, upon which I plainly told my old friend that he might go home and take care of the horse he had given me, but that I should never re-enter his doors. He went away with a laugh, leaving me to add this to the other little things the counsellor already knew of his plausible neighbour.

“ And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient to reconcile me to all my follies ; for here I spent three whole days. The counsellor had two sweet girls to his daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsichord ; and yet it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them ; for that being the first time also that either of them had touched the instrument since their mother's death, I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks. I every day endeavoured to go away, but every day was pressed and obliged to stay. On my going, the counsellor offered me his purse, with a horse and servant to convey me home ; but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea to bear my necessary expenses on the road.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ To Mrs. Anne Goldsmith, Ballymahon.”

This curious story which however bears not a few traces of the manner and characteristic simplicity of the writer, appeared so strange to Malone as to induce him to consider it mere invention of Oliver in order to answer some whim of the moment, or divert curiosity from further inquiry into the real cause of his absence. His opinion is thus communicated to Dr. Percy, June 5th, 1802, soon after the publication of the memoir prefixed to the works.

“ In the beginning of this letter I quite forgot to thank you for the entertainment which Goldsmith's Life afforded me. I only lamented that there was

not more of it. Surely I once read two or three more letters than we have in print. Have you any faith in the story that his sister tells of his giving a *dance* in college, when he had not a shilling in the world ; and of his excursion to the county of Cork, where we have a long story furnished by this lady without a single *name* or *date* ? For my part, I do not believe a word of either. They were mere inventions of the poet, to satisfy the whim of the moment. Why did he not name the Cork humourist, who offered him the wooden horse ? Give me but time, place, and names, and the genuineness or falsehood of any story may be easily ascertained." \*

From a very cautious inquirer like Malone, such suspicion was to be expected ; yet it exhibits, perhaps, more of caution than consideration of all the circumstances, as in the allusion, for instance, to the dance ; for though Goldsmith no doubt was usually poor, the arrival of a supply would probably to one of his disposition, prove the cause and the apology for such an act of extravagance. The story, if a fiction, could answer no obvious purpose ; it does not attempt to extenuate the fault of quitting his friends in so abrupt a manner, to explain his motives for going abroad, or give satisfactory reasons for relinquishing his design ; on the contrary, the whole is but an admission of continued thought-

\* From MS. correspondence in the possession of W. R. Mason, Esq., of the Temple.

lessness and imprudence. If considered merely in the light of an improbable tale, the critic did not remember how much of Goldsmith's career exhibits scenes still more strange and eventful, and peculiarities of character quite as strongly marked; some already known, and others now for the first time, perhaps, to be disclosed. That he proceeded to Cork and returned penniless, there seems no reason to doubt; nor could this be deemed strange in one who being then provided with a horse and money, should afterwards set out to travel over the continent of Europe on foot destitute of either. It is possible that the inhospitality of his acquaintance may be exaggerated. The incident of the staff, whether literally true or not, is introduced on another occasion:—"You are, my boy," said the Vicar of Wakefield to his son, "going to London on foot in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, travelled there before you. Take from me the same horse that was given him by the good Bishop Jewel, *this staff*, and take this book too; (the Bible) it will be your comfort on the way."

The question of names and dates is thus fairly disposed of by Bishop Percy in reply, July 13th, 1802. Had Ireland chanced to be the scene of Malone's critical researches, his progress would have been impeded every moment, by the want, even in important things, of what he here seems to think essential in a comparatively trifling matter:—

"Upon reconsidering your last obliging letter of

June 5th, I cannot concur in thinking that Mrs. Hodson's long story of Goldsmith's juvenile rambles is improbable because it is devoid of names and dates. It was at least forty years after the events that she wrote the account from memory ; and it would have been very incredible that she should have given dates concerning which she probably did not inquire at the time, or names of persons whom it is likely she never knew." \*

It being at length necessary to choose a profession, the law was determined upon ; and with this view Mr. Contarine supplied Goldsmith with fifty pounds, according to the account of Mrs. Hodson, and sent him off to the Irish metropolis on his way to London, in order to keep the usual terms common to Irish students. In Dublin, however, the same authority informs us, his evil genius again prevailed ; for being tempted into a gaming house, according to traditionary accounts, by a Roscommon acquaintance, no inconsiderable adept in the art, he was stripped of all his money, and again left to become a burthen and a subject of reproach to his friends.

The shame and mortification occasioned by this imprudence were very sincere ; for, however prone to fall into error, few felt more acutely or lamented more strongly, when too late, its usual results. He continued some time in Dublin without

\* MS. correspondence furnished by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

having courage to communicate his loss. This, however, being at length made known, he was again invited to the country and forgiven by his uncle, but less readily by his mother; who experienced no ordinary vexation and evinced some resentment, at such repeated imprudences and miscarriages. He lived for a few months afterwards with his brother Henry; until a quarrel arising from some trifling cause, proceeded to undue extremities\*, and for a time terminated all regard and intercourse between the brothers. We know it was not permanent; none were more aware of their own faults than Oliver, or more grateful for the kindness and exertions of his relatives for his interests, although continually subject to that weakness, which, however conscious of doing wrong, seems unable to perform what is right. This momentary anger, though carried farther on the part of both than propriety warranted, gradually subsided, and we have seen with what respect and tenderness he addresses him in the dedication to and introductory lines of the "Traveller." Another profession was chosen, not only with the concurrence of his immediate relatives, but the advice, as was asserted by the poet himself, of Dean Goldsmith of Cloyne; the design now being to proceed to Edinburgh and commence the study of physic.

\* Communicated to the Rev. Mr. Handcock, by Mrs. Hodson, who, however, was loth that all the circumstances attending what was at first considered a serious quarrel between them should transpire publicly.



During the two years he passed in the country, not unfavourable even in the want of fixed occupation for the exercise of a talent for poetry, he is said to have amused Miss Contarine and her father with occasional specimens of his verses, chiefly songs and light pieces; and to have drawn up, in compliance with the wish of his uncle, for some purpose not now remembered, remarks on the more popular poets, their comparative merits and defects; none of these were preserved by that lady; but when questioned many years afterwards, as Mrs. Lawder\*, by Mr. Daly, she said she understood they had been subsequently published in London, and when shown the Lady's Magazine, believed she recollected a few. Age and illness, however, rendered this evidence less precise and satisfactory than might be wished, though not wholly without value. Two of the songs, if inferior in poetical merit, resemble those among his acknowledged pieces which express simply a sentiment, and without vouching

\* The husband of this lady, long after the death of the Poet, was barbarously murdered; she herself, narrowly escaping the same fate, died in Dublin, about 1790.

He had bought an iron chest for the greater security of his papers and money, which occasioned the belief among his servants and labourers of its containing great treasures; they conspired in consequence to murder the family, rob the house, and burn it, in order to conceal all traces of their atrocities. Mr. Lawder was shot with his own blunderbuss, and his wife it was likewise supposed had been despatched; they carried off the plate, besides about 300*l.* in money, but failed in setting fire to the house. No less than six of the wretches concerned in this crime were detected and executed.

for their authenticity, are transcribed for the information of the reader. The prose piece alluded to is still more doubtful; in an enlarged and altered state, it is supposed to be the same printed in the Literary Magazine after Dr. Johnson had ceased to write in that Journal, and of which some notice will hereafter be taken.

THE STORY OF PROMETHEUS APPLIED.

UPON STEALING A KISS FROM A LADY ASLEEP.

This ! This is life ! All else a dream !  
 This is the true Promethean flame :  
 From heav'n by daring theft convey'd,  
 Though by the prize the risk 's o'erpaid.  
 But if to steal those heav'nly fires  
 An equal punishment requires,  
 While recent from the theft I glow,  
 Oh ! fix me on that breast of snow.  
 Well pleased to languish life away,  
 Love shall upon my vitals prey ;  
 Nor will I wish whilst there I 'm laid,  
 Alcides near to give me aid,

SONG.

I.

Life 's a garden rich in treasure,  
 Bury'd like the seeds in earth ;  
 There lies joy, contentment, pleasure,  
 But 'tis love must give them birth.

II.

From that sun its aid denying,  
 We no happiness can taste ;  
 But in cold obstruction lying,  
 Life is all one barren waste.

*Another.*

## I.

How happy is the humble cell,  
How blest the deep retreat,  
Where careful billows never swell,  
Nor passion's tempests beat.

## II.

But safely through the seas of life,  
Calm reason wafts us o'er ;  
Free from ambition, care, and strife,  
To death's all silent shore.

## TO A YOUNG LADY ON VALENTINE'S DAY.

## WITH THE DRAWING OF A HEART.

With submission at your shrine,  
Comes a heart your Valentine ;  
From the side where once it grew,  
See it panting flies to you.  
Take it, fair one, to your breast,  
Sooth the fluttering thing to rest ;  
Let the gentle, spotless toy,  
Be your sweetest, greatest joy ;  
Every night when wrapp'd in sleep,  
Next your heart the conquest keep ;  
Or if dreams your fancy move,  
Hear it whisper me and love ;  
Then in pity to the swain,  
Who must heartless else remain,  
Soft as gentle dewy show'rs,  
Slow descend on April flow'rs :  
Soft as gentle riv'lets glide,  
Steal unnoticed to my side ;  
If the gem you have to spare,  
Take your own and place it there.

By the united contributions of his uncle, brother, and sister (Mrs. Hodson), and their promise of continued support, as she stated to Mr. Handcock, he reached Edinburgh in the autumn of 1752, toward the commencement of the medical season. The change no doubt possessed much interest for one who, by the fruits of his observations, seems to have examined mankind with higher views than merely idle curiosity, and who contemplated the study on which he was about to enter with the more favour, as it promised increased opportunities of gratifying this favourite propensity by enabling him to turn his knowledge to use in whatever region he thought proper.

The professions of divinity and law exclusively confine the individual who follows either to one people and one country ; that of medicine has a more extended sphere of action, and belongs alike to all countries. The physician is, or may be, literally a citizen of the world ; for there is no creed, or code, or locality, to which he is of necessity confined ; his calling is of universal application, and seems equally in request in all communities of men, whether civilised or savage. But with this advantage, it is not the fitting pursuit of an ambitious or worldly man ; for though by its exercise subsistence may be procured in almost any place, yet in none, with a few exceptions, is it the road to wealth, and never, with us at least, to the highest honours ; it founds no great families, ensures no great estates, and receives no peerages. The trader, the manu-

facturer, the lawyer, and the divine, however humble their pretensions to merit, may by favour or by circumstances acquire the highest rank their country can bestow; but from the possessor of a degree of skill which may benefit the whole human race, and to which society is hourly and largely indebted, often for the unpaid and always for the unostentatious alleviation of an infinite portion of human misery, such honours are in England, at least in practice, withheld.

An instance of the habitual thoughtlessness belonging to Goldsmith's character, occurred at the moment of first setting foot in the northern metropolis. Having procured a lodging and deposited his luggage, he eagerly sallied forth to gratify curiosity by viewing the city, in which having occupied the whole of the day, the approach of night reminded him that he had neither inquired the name of his landlady, nor the street in which she lived: in this dilemma, having wandered about in a search which might have been useless, an accidental meeting with the cawdy, or porter, whom he had employed in the morning in removing to his new abode, obviated a difficulty that might have occasioned inconvenience.

In this house, which from the state of his finances may be presumed not to have been of the first description, he also agreed to board; and the economy of the table afterwards afforded a subject of ludicrous merriment when disposed to unbend in the more social circles of London by relating

anecdotes of his early life. A leg of mutton, as he told the story, dished up in various ways by the ingenuity of his hostess, served for the better part of dinner during a week, a dish of broth being made on the seventh day from the bones ; to which there seems an allusion in one of his works.—“ We seem to be pretty much in the situation of travellers at a Scotch inn : vile entertainment is served up, complained of, and sent down ; up comes worse, and that also is changed ; and every change makes our wretched cheer more unsavoury.” But having no relish for this system of management, he soon joined several fellow students, his acquaintance and countrymen, who were better accommodated in another quarter of the town.

His studies were commenced under the usual professors, among whom the elder Monro was more than once mentioned by him with respect, who then filled the chair devoted to medical science with a degree of reputation that drew many students to Edinburgh. Goldsmith probably felt the want of previous initiation into the elementary and practical parts of the art ; for medicine, unlike the pure sciences, is not to be wholly learnt from professors, or in colleges ; it has been said that he attended a course of anatomy in Dublin, but as his family made no allusion to this, it is probably incorrect. Willing however to commence with spirit, and avail himself of every source of professional information or discussion, he became, not long after his arrival, a member of the Medical Society in that



city, a voluntary association of the students which still continues to flourish with increased reputation. On reference to the books, his admission into it bears date January 13th, 1753, and it would seem, without having fulfilled the usual present condition required from a new member, that of reading a paper on a medical subject, which it may be very well conceived he could not, from his recent initiation into the profession, draw up himself.

The record of students in the University at this period being, as represented by the authorities, not now in existence, his name or course of studies cannot be more accurately traced. Chemistry is known to have been one of his favourite pursuits ; and it is believed, from the mention of his name on more than one occasion by the late celebrated Dr. Joseph Black, who graduated in Edinburgh in 1754, and became known as the discoverer of latent heat and other enlargements of chemical science, that he was at this period one of his acquaintance.

From anecdotes remembered by fellow-students who afterwards settled in London, and who told them when their subject had risen into celebrity, he appears to have been known more for his convivial qualities than the ardour of his studies ; he sang Irish songs, and told stories with considerable humour. It appears likewise, that his facility of temper in obliging others, and a large portion of that exuberance of animal spirits common to youth, drew him into occasional pecuniary difficulties ill

suited to scanty supplies ; these were rendered less regular, as his sister stated, by his own negligence in not writing with the requisite exactness promised on his departure, or giving such statements as were expected of his occupations and progress. He seemed to take a lead in convivial meetings of the students ; and for the purpose, as he imagined, of preserving the fancied honour of this position, felt or assumed a careless air on money matters, of which he himself related an instance to a party of friends at the Grecian Coffee House, when a similar frolic or bravado on the part of a young Templar became the subject of conversation. A new piece being announced for performance in the Edinburgh theatre, the intention of witnessing it was mentioned by some students with whom he passed the evening, when a proposal came in an off-hand manner from Goldsmith, as if the amount was of little moment to his purse, to draw lots with any one of the number, which of the two should treat the whole party to the play. "To my great though secret joy," he said, "they all declined the challenge. Had it been accepted, and had I proved to be the loser, part of my wardrobe must have been pledged in order to raise the money."

While here, he was known to display poetical powers, but in what way exerted, excepting in songs for the amusement of his companions, no distinct account is preserved ; few have an interest in remembering such things beyond the moment, and a general impression of the fact is all that can

be communicated to the biographer, after the lapse of a few years. Whatever their nature, they no doubt found their way into the periodical works with which he was subsequently connected in London. An Epigram, not the best of its kind, inserted in his works, bears the date of Edinburgh, 1758; and of letters the numbers written thence were inconsiderable. One of the few dated from this city after being resident in it about a year, was addressed to his friend Bryanton, and seems in the nature of a general acquittance of his debt of correspondence. It exhibits, contrary to an opinion expressed by some persons at the time of his death of his original style of writing being stiff, all his characteristic ease, humour, and vivacity. A copy, purchased in a sale of miscellaneous effects at Ballymahon, found its way into the *Anthologia Hibernica*, in 1793, from which imperfect transcripts have been made into more than one publication. The original, written on a folio sheet, has been submitted to the present writer by the Rev. Dr. Handcock, of Dublin, son-in-law of the gentleman to whom it was addressed, and in whose possession it remains.

All which it may be supposed he knew of Scotland at this time, he tells; the design is obviously, as indeed he in some measure intimates, to amuse his friend, and therefore we allow for a little comic exaggeration in his descriptions; but the admitted weaknesses of our northern countrymen, their extreme nationality, and rather too ardent admira-

tion of themselves, could not escape so keen an observer of character. It is amusing to consider how this letter, while it touches on this foible, furnishes in its fate an exemplification of the fact; for notwithstanding its excellence, and the scarcity of the Poet's epistolary communications, which are fewer in number than those of any other of our eminent writers, it has been omitted in the usual biographical notices prefixed to most of the Scottish editions of his works, for no other reason, as it appears, than containing a few harmless jests upon Scotland.

*" To Robert Bryanton, at Balymahon, Ireland.*

*" Edinburgh, Sept. 26th, 1753.*

*" MY DEAR BOB,*

*" How many good excuses (and you know I was ever good at an excuse) might I call up to vindicate my past shameful silence. I might tell how I wrote a long letter on my first coming hither, and seem vastly angry at my not receiving an answer; I might allege that business (with business you know I was always pestered) had never given me time to finger a pen. But I suppress those and twenty more as plausible, and as easily invented, since they might be attended with a slight inconvenience of being known to be lies. Let me then speak truth. An hereditary indolence (I have it from the mother's side) has hitherto prevented my writing to you, and still prevents my writing at least twenty-*

five letters more, due to my friends in Ireland. No turnspit dog gets up into his wheel with more reluctance than I sit down to write ; yet no dog ever loved the roast meat he turns better than I do him I now address.

“ Yet what shall I say now I am entered ? Shall I tire you with a description of this unfruitful country ; where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarcely able to feed a rabbit ? Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil. Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape. No grove\*, nor brook, lend their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty. Yet with all these disadvantages to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive. The poor have pride ever ready to relieve them. If mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration ; and that they can plentifully bestow upon themselves.

“ From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this country enjoys ; namely, the gentlemen here are much better bred than among us. No such characters here as our fox-hunters ; and they have expressed great surprise when I informed them, that some men in Ireland of one thousand pounds a year, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, drinking to be

\* Goldsmith has here anticipated his friend Johnson, in the well known censure of Scotland for want of trees.

drunk, and getting every girl with child that will let them. Truly, if such a being, equipped in his hunting dress, came among a circle of Scotch gentry, they would behold him with the same astonishment that a countryman does King George on horseback.

“The men here have generally high cheek bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular. Now that I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing hall, he sees one end of the room taken up by the ladies, who sit dimly in a group by themselves:—in the other end stand their pensive partners that are to be;—but no more intercourse between the sexes than there is between two countries at war. The ladies indeed may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady directress, or intendant, or what you will, pitches upon a lady and gentleman to walk a minuet; which they perform with a formality that approaches to despondence. After five or six couple have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country dances; each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady directress; so they dance much, say nothing, and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the ancient procession of the Roman matrons in honour of Ceres; and



the Scotch gentleman told me, (and, faith, I believe he was right) that I was a very great pedant for my pains.

“ Now I am come to the ladies ; and to show that I love Scotland, and every thing that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it—that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times finer and handsomer than the Irish. To be sure, now, I see your sisters Betty and Peggy vastly surprised at my partiality,—but tell them flatly, I don’t value them—or their fine skins, or eyes, or good sense, or ———, a potato ; — for I say, and will maintain it ; and as a convincing proof (I am in a great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies say it themselves. But to be less serious ; where will you find a language so prettily become a pretty mouth as the broad Scotch ? And the women here speak it in its highest purity ; for instance, teach one of your young ladies at home to pronounce the “ Whoar wull I gong ? ” with a becoming widening of mouth, and I’ll lay my life they’ll wound every hearer.

“ We have no such character here as a coquet, but alas ! how many envious prudes ! Some days ago I walked into my Lord Kilcoubry’s (don’t be surprised, my lord is but a glover)\*, when the

\* William Maclellan, who claimed the title, and whose son succeeded in establishing the claim in 1773. The father is said to have voted at the election of the sixteen Peers for Scotland ; and to have sold gloves in the lobby at this and other public assemblages.

Duchess of Hamilton (that fair who sacrificed her beauty to her ambition, and her inward peace to a title and gilt equipage) passed by in her chariot\* ;

\* Her Grace was one of the beautiful and celebrated Miss Gunnings. Her marriage with James, fourth Duke of Hamilton, which took place about eighteen months before, excited much attention in the fashionable world, and is thus amusingly, though perhaps not very correctly, told in one of the letters of Horace Walpole, February 1752. "The event that has made most noise since my last, is the extempore wedding of the youngest of the two Gunnings, who have made so vehement a noise. Lord Coventry, a grave young lord, of the remains of the patriot breed, has long dangled after the eldest, virtuously with regard to her virtue, not very honourably with regard to his own credit. About six weeks ago, Duke Hamilton, the very reverse of the Earl, hot, debauched, extravagant, and equally damaged in his fortune and person, fell in love with the youngest at the masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. About a fortnight since, at an immense assembly at my Lord Chesterfield's, made to show the house, which is really most magnificent, Duke Hamilton made violent love at one end of the room, while he was playing at pharo at the other end ; that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were of three hundred pounds each : he soon lost a thousand. I own I was so little a professor in love, that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl ; and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, why he played at all. However, two nights afterwards, being left alone with her while her mother and sister were at Bedford House, he found himself so impatient, that he sent for a parson. The doctor refused to perform the ceremony without licence or ring : the Duke swore he would send for the Archbishop ; — at last they were married with a ring of the bed-curtain, at half an hour after twelve at night, at Mayfair chapel. The Scotch are enraged ; the women mad that so much beauty has had its effect ; and what is most silly, my Lord Coventry declares that now he will marry the other."

her battered husband, or more properly the guardian of her charms, sat by her side. Straight envy began, in the shape of no less than three ladies who sat with me, to find faults in her faultless form.—“For my part,” says the first, “I think, what I always thought, that the Duchess has too much of the red in her complexion.”—“Madam, I am of your opinion,” says the second; “I think her face has a palish cast too much on the delicate order.”—“And let me tell you,” added the third lady, whose mouth was puckered up to the size of an issue, “that the Duchess has fine lips, but she wants a mouth.”—At this every lady drew up her mouth as if going to pronounce the letter P.

“But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women with whom I have scarcely any correspondence? There are, ’tis certain, handsome women here; and ’tis as certain they have handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and a poor man is society only for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances, and nature a person to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings, while I may sit down and laugh at the world, and at myself—the most ridiculous object in it. But you see I am grown downright splenetic, and perhaps the fit may continue till I receive an answer to this. I know you cannot send me much news from Ballymahon, but such as it is, send it all; every thing you send will be agreeable to me.

“ Has George Conway put up a sign yet ; or John Binely left off drinking drams ; or Tom Allen got a new wig ? But I leave you to your own choice what to write. While I live, know you have a true friend in yours, &c. &c. &c.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ P. S. Give my sincere respects (not compliments, do you mind) to your agreeable family, and give my service to my mother if you see her ; for, as you express it in Ireland, I have a sneaking kindness for her still. Direct to me, —, Student in Physic, in Edinburgh.”

Since the preceding pages were printed off, two additional letters of the Poet, written to his uncle Contarine from Scotland, which had been long though vainly sought in various quarters, have at length come to hand. The first, which is anterior in date to the preceding, describes the professors under whom he studied ; states the pleasure he takes in the sciences ; and adverts to a month's tour accomplished or rather as it would seem in progress, in the Highlands, reserving the description of it, he says, for a succeeding letter. No trace of this communication, which we may believe from his humour and skill in narration to have been of an amusing character, has been found.

“ *To the Rev. Thos. Contarine.*

“ May 8, 1753.

“ MY DEAR UNCLE,

“ In your letter (the only one I received from

VOL. I.

L

Kilmore), you call me the philosopher who carries all his goods about him. Yet how can such a character fit me, who have left behind in Ireland every thing I think worth possessing ; friends that I loved, and a society that pleased while it instructed ? Who but must regret the loss of such enjoyments ? Who but must regret his absence from Kilmore, that ever knew it as I did ? Here, as recluse as the Turkish Spy at Paris, I am almost unknown to every body, except some few who attend the professors of physic as I do.

“ Apropos, I shall give you the professors’ names, and, as far as occurs to me, their characters ; and first, as most deserving, Mr. Munro, Professor of Anatomy ; this man has brought the science he teaches to as much perfection as it is capable of ; and not content with barely teaching anatomy, he launches out into all the branches of physic, when all his remarks are new and useful. ’Tis he, I may venture to say, that draws hither such a number of students from most parts of the world, even from Russia. He is not only a skilful physician, but an able orator, and delivers things in their nature obscure in so easy a manner, that the most unlearned may understand him. Plume, Professor of Chemistry, understands his business well, but delivers himself so ill, that he is but little regarded. Alston, Professor of Materia Medica, speaks much, but little to the purpose. The Professors of Theory and Practice (of physic) say nothing but what we may find in books laid before us, and speak that in so

drowsy and heavy a manner, that their hearers are not many degrees in a better state than their patients.

“ You see then, dear sir, that Munro is the only great man among them ; so that I intend to hear him another winter, and go then to hear Albinus, the great professor at Leyden. I read (with satisfaction) a science the most pleasing in nature, so that my labours are but a relaxation, and, I may truly say, the only thing here that gives me pleasure. How I enjoy the pleasing hope of returning with skill, and to find my friends stand in no need of my assistance ! How many happy years do I wish you ! and nothing but want of health can take from you happiness, since you so well pursue the paths that conduct to virtue.

“ I am, my dear Uncle, your most obliged,

“ Most affectionate nephew,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ P.S.—I draw this time for 6*l.*, and will draw next October but for 4*l.*, as I was obliged to buy every thing since I came to Scotland, shirts not even excepted. I am a little more early the first year than I shall be for the future, for I absolutely will not trouble you before the time hereafter.

“ My best love attend Mr. and Mrs. Lawder, and Heaven preserve them ! I am again your dutiful nephew, O. G.

“ I have been a month in the Highlands. I set out the first day on foot, but an ill-natured corn I have got on my toe has for the future prevented



that cheap method of travelling ; so the second day I hired a horse, of about the size of a ram, and he walked away (trot he could not) as pensive as his master. In three days we reached the Highlands. This letter would be too long if it contained the description I intend giving of that country, so shall make it the subject of my next."

Having now resided about eighteen months in Edinburgh, and the sanction of his uncle obtained to fulfil the long meditated design of visiting the Continent on the plea of professional improvement, he prepared for his departure. Montpellier, which had then some reputation for physic, as well as Paris, are said to have been his original destination. But shortly before setting out, an interruption, one of the effects of good nature unable to resist importunity or what he considered the claims of friendship, retarded the design.

A fellow student named Kennedy, under the plea of great distress and a pledge of the speedy arrival of his own remittances, persuaded him to become answerable for a portion of his debts, which however failed to be discharged at the specified time promised by the debtor. Goldsmith was in consequence called upon for payment, but unable to raise the amount, was in turn obliged to have recourse to the assistance of two fellow students to escape a dilemma that threatened his personal liberty. These were men of considerable attainments, and not undistinguished in their respective spheres in life. One was Dr. Joseph Fenn Sleigh,

an amiable and intelligent Quaker, the schoolfellow of Burke at Ballitore, the first friend of Barry the painter, and who died prematurely in 1771, an eminent physician in Cork. The other was Mr. Lauchlan Macleane, a former associate in Trinity College, whose career seems to have embraced many changes of scene, and who afterwards by the public situations he held, the pamphlets he wrote, a challenge sent to Wilkes and not accepted, and the party with which he was connected, drew considerable notice in the political circles of London between the years 1765 and 1776.

The son of a gentleman of small fortune in the north of Ireland, and born about the year 1728, he was transferred at the age of eighteen from a school near Belfast, to Trinity College, Dublin.\* Here he became known to Burke and Goldsmith, and proceeding to Edinburgh to study physic, his name appears in the list of the Medical Society, January 4th, 1754, a year after that of Goldsmith, by whom he was introduced. He afterwards visited America—whether at first as a private practitioner, or medical officer in the army, does not appear; probably, as was then not unusual, officiating in both capacities. While in this country he acquired great medical reputation; followed by its common attendant envy from the less fortunate of his bre-

\* “ 1745 (1746) *Maii* 29<sup>o</sup> *Lauchlin McLeane Pens* :—*Filius Johanni generosi* — *Annum agens* 18 — *Natus in Comitatu Antrim.*—*Educatus sub ferula M<sup>ro</sup> Dennison* — *Tutor M<sup>r</sup> Read.* College Register.

thren; and an anecdote is told of him at this time which Almon quotes in one of his publications, as an instance of what he terms "true magnanimity." A rival practitioner extremely jealous of his success, and who had adopted every means, not excepting the most unfair, of injuring his credit, was at length afflicted by the dangerous illness of an only son; a consultation became necessary; and as possessing the first character for professional skill, Mr. Macleane was solicited to attend. His zeal proved unremitting; he sat up with the patient many nights, and chiefly by his sagacity and indefatigable efforts succeeded beyond expectation in restoring the young man to health; refusing all consideration for his labours, and saying to his friends, "Now am I amply revenged."

In 1761, while surgeon of Otway's regiment, quartered in Philadelphia, a quarrel took place with the Governor, against whom Macleane, who was a man of superior talents, wrote a paper distinguished for ability and severity, which drew general attention. Colonel Barré\*, subsequently so well known in political life, then serving there with his regiment

\* No memoir of this gentleman, who afterwards occupied so large a share of public attention during the American war by his speeches in Parliament, by the high offices he occasionally held under government, and as being the personal friend of Lord Shelburne, is said to exist. The following entry from the Register of Dublin University may assist the future inquirer: — "1740, *Novembris* 19°. — *Isaac. Barre Pens. — Filius Petri mercator — Annum agens 14 — Natus Dublinii — Educatus sub D<sup>no</sup> Loyd — Tutor Dr Pelissier.*"

and who was probably involved in the quarrel, is said to have formed a regard for him in consequence of the part he took ; but it is more likely that a previous acquaintance existed, as the Colonel had been likewise a member of Trinity College. Under the patronage of this officer he came to England, renewed his acquaintance with Burke, and procured an office under government. While travelling on the Continent in 1766, he proved useful to Barry, then on his way to Italy, who became known to him through the introduction of his first patrons, Burke and Dr. Sleigh. Soon afterwards he became successively private secretary to Lord Shelburne, and Under Secretary of State for the Southern Department, retiring from office with his patron on the dissolution of the ministry drawn together by the Duke of Grafton. In May, 1771, Lord North gave him the situation of superintendent of lazarettoes, with, as the newspapers of the day state, "a salary of £1000 a year, and two pounds per diem travelling expenses." In January following, he received the collectorship of Philadelphia : this was soon exchanged for an appointment in India, where he afterwards became a kind of agent to Mr. Hastings. In that capacity he brought home the Governor General's conditional resignation of office ; yet the latter, with that singularity which often influenced his proceedings in the government of India, took a speedy opportunity of disavowing both his agent and his act, although communicated to the Court of Directors in his own handwriting. In

proceeding again to India, intending it is said to take strong measures for an explanation of behaviour that seemed to throw censure upon his honesty or honour, the ship in which he embarked foundered, and all on board perished, with papers seriously criminatory, according to report, of the administration of Mr. Hastings.

Mr. Macleane enjoyed the credit of being quick, clear-headed, and well informed; and by some was considered as possessing "wonderful powers:" an impediment in speech precluded him from being useful in Parliament, or shining in conversation. He is one of the many persons supposed to have written the letters of Junius; but this conjecture is untenable from the fact that his patron, Lord Shelburne, had been virulently attacked by that writer under another signature in 1767\*, when Macleane was his Under Secretary. And having published a pamphlet or two on the affairs of Falkland's Islands, in defence of the ministry which had dismissed him from office, was himself ridiculed by Junius, writing under the signature of Vindex†, in March, 1771. From these and other circumstances, the question of the authorship of these letters cannot therefore be decided by any claims put forward for Mr. Macleane. His private character for benevolence and several good qualities stood high in the opinion of the Burkes, and is ex-

\* Vide Woodfall's Junius, ed. 1812; vol. ii. p. 470.

† Ibid. vol. iii. p. 343.

pressed without reserve in correspondence with Barry.

Another fellow-student with whom Goldsmith preserved an intimacy in future life, was Mr. (afterwards Dr.) William Farr, a Fellow of the Royal Society, who having entered into the medical service of the navy about 1760, for a long term of years filled the office of physician to the great Naval Hospitals of Haslar and Plymouth. He had been educated under the eminent Dr. Doddridge of Northampton, had spent two years at Aberdeen previous to coming to Edinburgh, possessed literary tastes, and by his manners and attainments found ready admission into many of the literary circles of London, to which Goldsmith sometimes formed the channel of introduction. From him part of the little which is known of the latter while in the Scottish metropolis is derived; and more would have been gleamed of their subsequent intercourse in London, but for the habit of writing his daily remarks in a short hand which could not be deciphered. A few autograph memorials of the Poet remain in his family, one of which is the original copy of the dialogue-epilogue meant to be spoken by Mrs. Bulkley and Miss Catley, presented by himself to Dr. Farr, and since printed in his works.\*

\* From the information of Mr. William Farr Rose, of the Navy Pay Office, his grandson, and son of Mr. Rose, the friend of Cowper. One of the incidents in their meetings in Edinburgh, in which Goldsmith bore a part, though not a conspicuous one, was thus told by Dr. Farr. The question was started in



The second recently discovered letter, without date, though written in January 1754, or the end of the previous December, states his intention to go to Paris in the spring, and to Leyden the following winter. By this also it would seem a new incident in his life is disclosed, that of having been an inmate of the Duke of Hamilton ; on what occasion, in what capacity, or by whose introduction does not appear, but it is evident he did not like his position in the family. In the letter to Bryanton from Edinburgh, it will be remembered, he alludes to the Duchess, with whom, it is possible, some acquaintance may have been afterwards formed through her Irish connections.

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an evening association of students, whether it was probable the spirits of deceased friends were permitted to revisit their former haunts, and some ingenuity it was thought was exhibited in the arguments for and against it brought forward during the discussion. One of the disputants sailed, with the knowledge of all the party, for London the following morning ; but on the ensuing day, unknown to them, the vessel was obliged to put back. Meeting with a companion of the previous night on re-entering the city, he was requested to keep out of sight till the evening, when the argument was to be resumed ; accordingly, on re-assembling, one of the most sturdy opponents of the question, who professed utter incredulity as to apparitions, second sight, and other popular superstitions of Scotland, was asked whether his unbelief would give way to demonstration ; and after some preliminary manœuvres calculated to excite awe and anxiety, the friend who was supposed to be on his way to London suddenly appeared. The effect upon the object of this boyish experiment was said to have been fainting at first, and afterwards deprivation of reason.

*“ To the Rev. Thomas Contarine.*

“ MY DEAR UNCLE,

“ After having spent two winters in Edinburgh, I now prepare to go to France the 10th of next February. I have seen all that this country can exhibit in the medical way, and therefore intend to visit Paris, where the great Mr. Farhein, Petit, and Du Hammel de Monceau instruct their pupils in all the branches of medicine. They speak French\*, and consequently I shall have much the advantage of most of my countrymen, as I am perfectly acquainted with that language, and few who leave Ireland are so.

“ Since I am upon so pleasing a topic as self applause, give me leave to say that the circle of science which I have run through, before I undertook the study of physic, is not only useful, but absolutely necessary to the making a skilful physician. Such sciences enlarge our understanding, and sharpen our sagacity ; and what is a practitioner without both but an empiric, for never yet was a disorder found entirely the same in two patients. A quack, unable to distinguish the particularities in each disease, prescribes at a venture : if he finds such a disorder may be called by the general name of fever for instance, he has a set of remedies which he applies to cure it, nor does he desist till

\* He means no doubt in contradistinction to other Continental medical schools, where they may have lectured in Latin.

his medicines are run out, or his patient has lost his life. But the skilful physician distinguishes the symptoms, manures the sterility of nature, or prunes her luxuriance ; nor does he depend so much on the efficacy of medicines as on their proper application. I shall spend this spring and summer in Paris, and the beginning of next winter go to Leyden. The great Albinus is still alive there, and 't will be proper to go, though only to have it said that we have studied in so famous an university.

“ As I shall not have another opportunity of receiving money from your bounty till my return to Ireland, so I have drawn for the last sum that I hope I shall ever trouble you for ; 't is 20*l*. And now, dear Sir, let me here acknowledge the humility of the station in which you found me ; let me tell how I was despised by most, and hateful to myself. Poverty, hopeless poverty, was my lot, and Melancholy was beginning to make me her own. When you — but I stop here, to inquire how your health goes on ? How does my cousin Jenny, and has she recovered her late complaint ? How does my poor Jack Goldsmith ? I fear his disorder is of such a nature as he won't easily recover. I wish, my dear Sir, you would make me happy by another letter before I go abroad, for there I shall hardly hear from you. I shall carry just 33*l*. to France, with good store of clothes, shirts, &c. &c., and that with economy will serve.

“ I have spent more than a fortnight every second

day at the Duke of Hamilton's, but it seems they like me more as a *jester* than as a companion ; so I disdained so servile an employment ; 'twas unworthy my calling as a physician.\*

“ I have nothing new to add from this country ; and I beg, dear Sir, you will excuse this letter, so filled with egotism. I wish you may be revenged on me, by sending an answer filled with nothing but an account of yourself.

“ I am, dear Uncle,

“ Your most devoted

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ Give my —— how shall I express it ? Give my earnest love to Mr. and Mrs. Lawder.”

\* Notice has been taken in a preceding page of his allusions to the situation of dependent to a great man, as if something of that kind lingered in his recollection.

## CHAP. V.

QUITS EDINBURGH.—LETTER FROM LEYDEN.—ANECDOTES.—  
JOURNEY ON THE CONTINENT.

To have gained the regard of men of sense and character, who had abundant opportunities in the familiar intercourse of students, of judging justly of his heart and understanding, is proof that his general conduct was free from reproach. Neither is there any doubt that they had formed a high estimate of his learning and talents. By their assistance he was saved from arrest; and quitting Edinburgh, though probably not with all the wealth (33*l*.) he had calculated upon, is said to have passed a short time in the north of England for the gratification of his curiosity; where we shall see that the first object of interest in his eyes was the beauty of the “farmers’ daughters.”

At Sunderland he was said by his Edinburgh acquaintance to have been arrested by one Barclay a tailor; and at Newcastle, according to others, the same misfortune occurred to him again.\*

\* By an obliging communication from the Rev. Dr. Bliss of Oxford, the writer is informed that the venerable president of Magdalen College, in relation to this subject, states, that his tutor at Queen’s, a Mr. M——, a north countryman, who had known Goldsmith, told a story of his getting into debt to a tailor in Newcastle, and of either being arrested, or going off without payment. All these accounts, no doubt, originated with the Poet himself, for the reason assigned to his uncle.

Strange as it may seem, these stories originated with the Poet himself, in order to conceal the fact of imprisonment upon another, though unfounded charge, the mere name of which he believed might cause his degree to be withheld. This charge, and the story at length, is told in the following letter to his uncle, written from Leyden, which he desired to visit as a favourite school of physic, though accident carried him thither sooner than originally intended. The escape from perishing by shipwreck which it describes, is another of those singular occurrences that throw an air of romance over parts of his history, that nevertheless there are not the slightest reasons to disbelieve.

*“ To the Rev. Thomas Contarine.*

*“ Leyden (the date wanting, but no doubt April or May, 1754.)*

*“ DEAR SIR,*

*“ I suppose by this time I am accused of either neglect or ingratitude, and my silence imputed to my usual slowness of writing. But believe me, Sir, when I say, that till now I had not an opportunity of sitting down with that ease of mind which writing required. You may see by the top of the letter that I am at Leyden; but of my journey hither you must be informed.*

*“ Sometime after the receipt of your last I embarked for Bourdeaux, on board a Scotch ship called the St. Andrew's, Captain John Wall master. The ship made a tolerable appearance; and as another inducement, I was let to know that six*



agreeable passengers were to be my company. Well, we were but two days at sea, when a storm drove us into a city of England called Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We all went on shore to refresh us after the fatigues of our voyage. Seven men and I were one day on shore ; and on the following evening, as we were all very merry, the room door bursts open ; enters a sergeant, and twelve grenadiers with their bayonets screwed, and puts us all under the King's arrest. It seems my company were Scotchmen in the French service, and had been in Scotland to enlist soldiers for the French army. I endeavoured all I could to prove my innocence ; however, I remained in prison with the rest a fortnight, and with difficulty got off even then. Dear Sir, keep this all a secret, or at least say it was for debt ; for if it were once known at the University, I should hardly get a degree. But hear how Providence interfered in my favour : the ship was gone on to Bourdeaux before I got from prison, and was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, and every one of the crew were drowned. It happened the last great storm. There was a ship at that time ready for Holland : I embarked, and in nine days, thank my God, I arrived safe at Rotterdam ; whence I travelled by land to Leyden ; and whence I now write.

You may expect some account of this country ; and though I am not well qualified for such an undertaking, yet I shall endeavour to satisfy some part of your expectations. Nothing surprised me

more than the books every day published descriptive of the manners of this country. Any young man who takes it into his head to publish his travels, visits the countries he intends to describe; passes through them with as much inattention as his valet de chambre; and consequently not having a fund himself to fill a volume, he applies to those who wrote before him, and gives us the manners of a country, not as he must have seen them, but such as they might have been fifty years before.

“The modern Dutchman is quite a different creature from him of former times; he in every thing imitates a Frenchman, but in his easy disengaged air, which is the result of keeping polite company. The Dutchman is vastly ceremonious, and is perhaps what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better bred. But the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature: upon a head of lank hair, he wears a half-cocked narrow hat, laced with black ribbon; no coat, but seven waistcoats, and nine pair of breeches; so that his hips reach almost up to his arm-pits. This well-clothed vegetable is now fit to see company, or to make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite! Why, she wears a large fur cap with a deal of Flanders lace; and for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats.

“A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove with

coals in it, which when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats ; and at this chimney, dozing Strephon lights his pipe. I take it that this continual smoking is what gives the man the ruddy, healthful complexion he generally wears, by draining his superfluous moisture, while the woman, deprived of this amusement, overflows with such viscidities as tint the complexion, and give that paleness of visage which low fenny grounds and moist air conspire to cause.

“ A Dutch woman and Scotch will well bear an opposition. The one is pale and fat, the other lean and ruddy : the one walks as if she were straddling after a go-cart, and the other takes too masculine a stride. I shall not endeavour to deprive either country of its share of beauty ; but must say, that of all objects on this earth, an English farmer’s daughter is most charming. Every woman there is a complete beauty, while the higher class of women want many of the requisites to make them even tolerable. Their pleasures here are very dull, though very various. You may smoke, you may doze, you may go to the Italian comedy,—as good an amusement as either of the former. This entertainment always brings in harlequin, who is generally a magician ; and in consequence of his diabolical art, performs a thousand tricks on the rest of the persons of the drama, who are all fools. I have seen the pit in a roar of laughter at this humour, when with his sword he touches the glass from which another was drinking. ’Twas not his

face they laughed at, for that was masked. They must have seen something vastly queer in the wooden sword, that neither I, nor you, sir, were you there, could see.\*

“In winter, when their canals are frozen, every house is forsaken, and all people are on the ice; sleds drawn by horses, and skating, are at that time the reigning amusements. They have boats here that slide on the ice, and are driven by the winds. When they spread all their sails they go more than a mile and a half a minute, and their motion is so rapid that the eye can scarcely accompany them. Their ordinary manner of travelling is very cheap and very convenient: they sail in covered boats drawn by horses; and in these you are sure to meet people of all nations. Here the Dutch slumber, the French chatter, and the English play at cards. Any man who likes company may have them to his taste. For my part, I generally detached myself from all society, and was wholly taken up in observing the face of the country. Nothing can equal its beauty: wherever I turn my eyes, fine houses, elegant gardens, statues, grottoes, vistas, presented themselves; but when you enter their towns, you are charmed beyond description. No misery is to be seen here: every one is usefully employed.

“Scotland and this country bear the highest

\* This description of the Dutch drama would seem (by the remarks of Mr. D'Israeli, *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. ii. p. 165.) not to be overcharged.

contrast. There hills and rocks intercept every prospect ; here, 't is all a continued plain. There you might see a well-dressed duchess issuing from a dirty close ; and here, a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch may be compared to a tulip planted in dung ; but I never see a Dutchman in his own house, but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox.

“ Physic is by no means taught so well here as in Edinburgh ; and in all Leyden there are but four British students, owing to all necessities being so extremely dear, and the professors so very lazy (the chemical professor excepted), that we don't much care to come hither. I am not certain how long my stay here may be ; however I expect to have the happiness of seeing you at Kilmore, if I can, next March.

“ Direct to me, if I am honoured with a letter from you, to Madam Diallyon's at Leyden.

“ Thou best of men, may Heaven guard and preserve you, and those you love !

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Nothing imparts a better idea of the philosophical indifference of the Poet to evils merely temporary or physical, than the little concern expressed about an event that would have been, to other men, a theme of loud and angry complaint—the being imprisoned a fortnight on an unfounded suspicion. His only anxiety seems to have been respecting his degree ; and however conscious of innocence,

he probably believed, from the equivocal situation in which he was found, and the general attachment to the Stuarts then prevailing in Scotland, that difficulties might occur in proving it to the satisfaction of the College authorities. It is believed, that testimonials of conduct and character from his acquaintance in Edinburgh were found necessary previous to his final enlargement.

In Ireland a story is told that, being plunged into further difficulties by the departure of the ship with a portion of his baggage on board, he was recommended to follow her on his release from prison rather than proceed to Holland, but exclaimed with characteristic simplicity, "What is the use of that? Sure it will be sent after me any where!" Another jest against him, taken like several more from his own writings, has likewise found currency; that in a moment of absence he committed the blunder imputed to the philosophic wanderer in his novel, of proceeding to Holland to teach the natives English, when he himself knew nothing of Dutch. And considering the diversity of route between that which he intended to take and that actually pursued, Bourdeaux and Rotterdam, without stating more explicitly the reasons for deviating so widely from his first route, it may be difficult to disprove any story however absurd, excepting we believe what is probably true, that committing his destiny to chance he cared not on what part of the Continent he was flung.



His first impressions of Holland, and the objects natural and artificial presented to view, were those of admiration and surprise. "A youth just landed at the Brille," he observes\*, "resembles a clown at a puppet-show ; carries his amazement from one miracle to another ; from this cabinet of curiosities to that collection of pictures ; but wondering is not the way to grow wise." Extending his view over the country, he tells us in another place, in a sketch at once poetical and accurate, that the ocean —

" Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile ;  
The slow canal, the yellow blossom'd vale,  
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,  
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,  
A new creation rescued from his reign."

The character of the people, as may be supposed from one of his temperament, is less favourably estimated than by more sober inquirers ; not that any importance is to be attached to first opinions, when with the common error of a young man and a young traveller, he attempts to judge the habits and manners of foreigners by the standard of his own country, and stamps their deviations as defects. But he has gone further, and affixed in his poem a general stigma on the Dutch nation, ungenerous and undeserved :—

" Even liberty itself is barter'd here :  
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies ;  
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys :  
A land of tyrants and a den of slaves."

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\* Inquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

Viewed with the eye of a poet, the people of Holland may appear more strongly intent on the pursuit of wealth than of fame or unprofitable honours; but the statesman can never consider them otherwise than with interest and favour, for services rendered on many trying occasions to the commonwealth of Europe. They may not be eminent for oratory or poetry, for wit or ingenuity, for literary acquirements or for winning manners; but they are far from being unlearned, and are otherwise deserving of sincere esteem; they are moral, industrious, and free; they struggled long and bravely for liberty, and obtained it; they had sufficient good sense and reflection to seek, in common with the most enlightened nations of Europe, reformation of the abuses of religion; and if undue love of money be a vice, it is at least more useful to their country, and more innocent in itself, than that devotion to pleasure and laxity of morals characteristic of some of their neighbours.

On another occasion he could be more just. "The best and most useful laws I have ever seen are generally practised in Holland. When two men are determined to go to law with each other, they are first obliged to go before the reconciling judges, called the *peace-makers*. If the parties come attended by an advocate or solicitor, they are obliged to retire, as we take fuel from the fire we are desirous of extinguishing."\*

\* Bee, No. v. Upon Political Frugality, Works, vol. i.

The Dutch he likewise preferred to the Flemings :—the distinction drawn between two of their chief towns exhibits something of the superiority of national character which exists even more strongly in the present day. “ In Rotterdam you may go through eight or ten streets without finding a public house. In Antwerp almost every second house seems an ale-house. In the one city, all wears the appearance of happiness and warm affluence ; in the other, the young fellows walk about the streets in shabby finery ; their fathers sit at the door darning or knitting stockings, while their ports are filled with dunghills.”

At Leyden he is said to have been less attentive to the acquisition of professional than miscellaneous knowledge, particularly a more familiar acquaintance with the language and literature of France, preparatory to an intended tour through that country. Physic, he remarks, was not so well taught there as in Edinburgh, and he charges the professors, excepting one, with inactivity. Yet the celebrated Albinus was then professor of anatomy ; a laborious author and editor, whose anatomical plates were not merely the most accurate, but the most splendid things of that description seen in Europe. The chemical professor, possessed of at least equal reputation, was Gaubius, and him he exempts from the general imputation : with this eminent person, as an admirer of the science which he taught, he was probably more intimate ; and of whom, when stating that among the universities

abroad he had ever observed their stupidity in reciprocal proportion to their opulence, he relates the following remarks : —

“ Happening once, in conversation with Gaubius of Leyden, to mention the College of Edinburgh, he began by complaining that all the English students who formerly came to his university, now went entirely there ; and the fact surprised him more, as Leyden was now as well as ever furnished with masters excellent in their respective professions. He concluded by asking if the professors at Edinburgh were rich. I replied, that the salary of a professor there seldom amounted to more than thirty pounds a year. ‘ Poor men ! ’ says he, ‘ I heartily wish they were better provided for ; until they become rich, we can have no expectation of English students at Leyden.’ ”\*

Of the few young men of that description then resident there, one was his countryman, Dr. Ellis, who, having graduated in Dublin, had visited Leyden to extend his knowledge. He continued there for two or three years, commencing on his return a course of philosophical lectures in the Irish metropolis, and subsequently it is believed, settled as physician in Monaghan, whence he removed to Dublin on being appointed clerk to the Irish House of Commons. He died in 1791.† From accounts

\* Inquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

† From the information of M. Weld Hartstonge, Esq. of Dublin, to whose politeness the writer is indebted for several inquiries connected with this work, and whose recent death he has, in common with others, to lament.

given by this gentleman in conversation in various societies in Dublin, it appears that the Poet was often in his usual pecuniary distress ; sometimes reduced to great straits, obliged to borrow small sums from such as could afford to lend until his own remittances arrived, or other mode of repayment offered : occasionally he taught his native language ; and sometimes resorted to play, frequently the forlorn hope of the necessitous as well as the amusement of the idle or the dissipated, in the hope by some lucky effort of extricating himself from difficulties. Such habits we may lament more than condemn, for the needy are almost necessarily among the irregular in conduct ; and it requires some self-denial and strength of mind to prevent poverty from relaxing even rigid morality. But it had little influence on his good humour ; he was usually gay and cheerful ; and when taxed with imprudence for risking such small sums as he possessed, admitted the fact and promised amendment for the future. In all his peculiarities it was remarked there was about him an elevation of mind, a philosophical tone and manner, which added to the language and information of a scholar made him an object of interest to such as could estimate character.

Having had a successful run at play, according to Dr. Ellis, Goldsmith called upon that gentleman the following morning, and counted out a considerable sum, which he was advised not again to trust to chance, but hoard as a provision for future

necessities. This recommendation he promised to follow, and probably meant to fulfil; but he was again seduced to the scene of his former success, and with the usual lot of the dupes to this passion, lost the whole of what he had previously gained.

At Leyden, from the information to be obtained at present, he took no degree\*; but having resided there about a year, formed the resolution to travel, in defiance of want of the necessary pecuniary means. Privation and hardship being habitual to one so frequently suffering from straitened finances, presented a less forbidding aspect to him than to most other men. He possessed an ardent curiosity, a buoyant spirit, and a constitutional inclination to look rather to the bright than dark side of the prospect; a disposition in some degree national, for it is a well known and avowed peculiarity of the lower orders of his countrymen, to put as large a share of their faith in chance as in conduct, in much of the business of life. Reliance was, no doubt, placed upon his own ingenuity, his learning, and medical knowledge: he was young; his frame, though short in stature, vigorous and accustomed to fatiguing exercises; he had learned from others of his coun-

\* “ Mr. Hudson presents his compliments to Mr. Prior, and begs to inform him, that Dr. Wenckebach of Breda has had the kindness to request of Professor Reinwardt to ascertain, from the *Album Academicum* of the University of Leyden, whether Goldsmith was a student from 1754 to 1756, or whether any degree was conferred upon him by that University; and the result of the inquiry is in each case in the negative.” It was not then usual, perhaps, to record the names of all students.



trymen, occasional visitors at Leyden from the continental universities, that travelling presented fewer difficulties than might be supposed, and he expected in the chief towns to find friends or occasional remittances from home. Something of the romantic interest attending such an enterprise undertaken in such a manner, is lost from its having of late been accomplished by several naval and military officers, who by skilful and rigid economy, have traversed Flanders, France, Switzerland, and parts of Germany on foot at trifling expense, which, as they state, had circumstances required it, might have been reduced to a still smaller sum.

A more immediate encouragement to meet the difficulties of the enterprise, was probably the knowledge that it had been before accomplished by a literary adventurer worse provided than himself, the Baron Louis de Holberg, who had then (1754) recently died. The outline of his story, as given by Goldsmith, shows that this example was in his eye, and in fact became the model of his conduct :—

“ The history of polite learning in Denmark may be comprised in the life of one single man ; it rose and fell with the late famous Baron Holberg. This was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary personages that has done honour to the present century. His being the son of a private centinel did not abate the ardour of his ambition, for he learned to read without a master. Upon the death of his father, being left entirely destitute, he was involved in all that distress which is common

among the poor, and of which the great have scarce any idea. However, though only a boy of nine years old, he still persisted in pursuing his studies, travelled about from school to school, and begged his learning and his bread.

“ When at the age of seventeen, instead of applying himself to any of the lower occupations, which seem best adapted to such circumstances, he was resolved to travel, for improvement, from Norway, the place of his birth, to Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark. He lived here by teaching French, at the same time avoiding no opportunity of improvement that his scanty funds would permit. But his ambition was not to be restrained, or his thirst of knowledge satisfied until he had seen the world. *Without money, recommendations, or friends, he undertook to set out upon his travels, and make the tour of Europe on foot. A good voice and a trifling skill in music were the only finances he had to support an undertaking so extensive ; so he travelled by day, and at night sang at the doors of peasants’ houses, to get himself a lodging.* In this manner young Holberg passed through France, Germany, and Holland, and, coming over to England, took up his residence in the University of Oxford. Here he subsisted by teaching French and music, and wrote his Universal History, his earliest but worst performance. Furnished with all the learning of Europe, he at last thought proper to return to Copenhagen, where his ingenious productions quickly gained him that favour he deserved.

He composed not less than eighteen comedies; those in his own language are said to excel, and those which are wrote in French have peculiar merit. He was honoured with nobility, and enriched by the bounty of the King; so that a life, begun in contempt and penury, ended in opulence and esteem.”\*

When about to quit Leyden, his purse being at a low ebb, application was made to Dr. Ellis for assistance, but an effort of affectionate gratitude of the borrower towards his uncle, rendered the supply received from that gentleman of little use. For having wandered into the garden of a florist whose productions he had admired during the summer, and some of which were at one time raised into an extravagantly fictitious value in Holland, the recollection of Mr. Contarine's taste for the cultivation of those beautiful productions, induced him to purchase a supply of the roots for transmission to Ireland. This imprudence, as it may be considered in a situation so impoverished, left him by the statement of the lender, with scarcely any money, and but one clean shirt, to set forward. Probably there is in this some error: he may have been poor enough, but reports of extreme destitution, like that of great wealth, are sometimes exaggerated for the sake of effect.

Few particulars of this tour are accurately known, while recent and diligent inquiries have thrown

\* Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning. See Works, vol. i.

only small additional light on the subject. He kept no journal, wrote only occasionally to his friends, though as we know he gave the Rev. Mr. Percy verbally an outline of his route, which might have been rendered sufficiently complete and probably very amusing, had the requisite questions which he alone could answer, been put at the moment. No more than one or two of his letters, written from the Continent, although several were remembered by Mrs. Hodson, are believed to be now in existence. These were first traced to Roscommon, next to Dublin, back again to a different part of the same county, thence to Greenock in Scotland, from this again to Ireland, next to Brighton, afterwards to Passy near Paris, and finally to England, besides letters on the same errand to Nice and Nova Scotia; and though the clue is not wholly lost, the writer has failed to obtain their perusal. In conversation he is known to have occasionally detailed incidents in his adventures, the particulars of which are now forgotten; others, and from his destitute condition perhaps the most curious, he probably never did or would, from very excusable reserve, disclose to any one. But his condition is pretty plainly intimated in the expressive lines commencing the Traveller, and marking nearly the extreme points of his journey—

*“ Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,  
Or by the lazy Scheldt or wandering Po,”—*

and the descriptive account in the same poem of the French peasantry.

The only detailed account probably committed by him to paper, was a letter to Doctor Radcliff, fellow of Trinity College, who having occasionally lectured Wilder's pupils and being an amiable man, was applied to by Goldsmith on his return from the Continent for a favour hereafter to be mentioned, and in return wrote him an account of his travels. The letter was long, and in the opinion of that gentleman, one of the most able and interesting of all his productions. Nothing except its general purport is remembered, the original being consumed by fire which destroyed the house of the Doctor, and the greater part of the street (Great Cuffe Street, Dublin) in which he resided. It had been deposited with others of his letters for greater security in the plate chest, which a servant on the alarm of fire being given, rushed up stairs to save, but by mistake seized another of similar appearance filled with books of divinity ; and there was no time to return and rectify the error. The plate and letters were therefore destroyed.\*

Incidents connected with his own adventures occur no doubt in the story of what he terms a 'philosophic vagabond' in the Vicar of Wakefield ; not literally true perhaps in detail, but with

\* Communicated to the writer by Dr. Radcliff, Judge of the Prerogative Court in Dublin, to whose father the letters were addressed.

such variations as suited a work of imagination, leaving himself at liberty by this arrangement of denying or admitting the accuracy of such parts as he thought proper. In familiar moments, he confessed his poverty, his musical efforts to amuse the peasantry, and his disputations at seats of learning; other hints may be gleaned from the Traveller and Inquiry into Polite Learning; and other circumstances again, it is obvious, were wholly imaginary, or represented differently from what really occurred. Thus, he makes his hero embark for Holland to teach the natives English without knowing Dutch; lands him at Amsterdam instead of Rotterdam; takes him to Louvain to teach the professors Greek; says nothing of Leyden, or of Switzerland, and no more of Italy than that his pupil embarked for England at Leghorn; while this person, described as inheriting the property of an uncle in the West Indies, was said to have really been heir to a well known pawnbroker in Holborn, of great wealth, named Smyth, or Smyly.

He set out about February 1755; a proof, perhaps, of being better furnished with resources than is supposed by choosing such a season. One of his chief resting places in Flanders is said to have been Louvain, not to instruct the professors in the manner humorously mentioned in the novel, but to gain some knowledge of its learning and system of discipline; for the remark put into the mouth of his hero, speaking of literary topics, held true with regard to himself, "I always forgot the



meanness of my circumstances when I could converse upon such subjects." Here he was said, in a short memoir published after his death, written by a person named Glover, known as an occasional acquaintance, to have taken the degree of M.B. It is doubtful, however, whether such intermediate step to the Doctorate is common in the universities on the Continent, though certainly granted in some ; the records at Louvain however for that period are lost\* ; the statement, therefore, cannot be disproved, but from a comparison of circumstances it is improbable. At Antwerp he spent a short time, and likewise at Brussels : in the former he saw and spoke of a criminal, whose gaiety though maimed, deformed, and suffering the punishment of chains and slavery for life, is made the subject of one of his essays† ; and at Maestricht examined an extensive and well known cavern, or stone quarry, an object of interest then to travellers.

\* From the Abbé de Foere, Chaplain to the English Nuns at Bruges, the following letter has been received by the writer :

" SIR,

" Bruges, June 19, 1832.

" My friends at the University of Louvain have perused the annals of that famous school, and have made every possible inquiry to get some information about Oliver Goldsmith, but they did not succeed. The annals of that period, including the years 1754—55—56, are wanting, and probably lost during the various disturbances our country underwent since the latter end of last century. I am sorry, Sir, I have not been able to answer your inquiries in a more satisfactory way. I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

" DE FOERE."

† " Happiness dependent on Constitution." Bee, Oct. 13, 1759. Works, vol. i.

In France, judging from admissions in works both of fact and fiction, his adventures seem to have been as unusual as his situation, and they are turned to his usual benevolent purpose of shewing the poorer classes in an amiable light. "I had some knowledge of music," he says in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, "with a tolerable voice, and now turned what was my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry ; for I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards night-fall, I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice attempted to play for people of fashion ; but they always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me even with a trifle."

No ordinary love of learning, of novelty, of acquaintance with men and manners, or of persevering determination to examine them all as far as circumstances permitted, could induce any one to subject himself to such a precarious existence ; yet we know, by what has been stated and by specific avowal of the fact in his poem, that such was occasionally his own condition. One of the spots where, and the mode in which, this musical skill was exerted, and even the degree of that skill so exactly correspondent with fact, for his performance was

not first-rate, is thus minutely and poetically painted :—

“ How often have I led the sportive choir,  
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire !  
Where shading elms along the margin grew,  
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew ;  
And haply, though my harsh touch, faltering still,  
But mock'd all tune and marr'd the dancers' skill,  
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,  
And dance forgetful of the noon-tide hour.”

His mode of travelling is again expressly intimated in a work of fact :—“ Countries wear very different appearances to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in a post chaise, and the pilgrim who walks the grand tour on foot, will form very different conclusions. *Haud inexpertus loquor.*”\*

At Paris he attended the lectures of Rouelle, an eminent professor of chemistry, who first ascertained the composition of the diamond by submitting it to combustion. In allusion to the scientific tastes of the fair sex of that day in that metropolis, he says, in the work just quoted, “ I have seen as bright a circle of beauty at the chemical lectures of Rouelle as gracing the court of Versailles.”

While here, he wrote to Ireland for pecuniary assistance, intimating his wants in a simple yet

\* Enquiry into Polite Learning, 1759, p. 161. In the second edition, published in 1774 with his name, the Latin clause—probably a sacrifice to pride—was omitted. See Works, vol. i.

humorous strain.\* Here likewise he met several persons he knew; a Mr. Macdonnell of Dublin, a gentleman from Roscommon, whose name is forgotten, and a few college acquaintance from Dublin and Edinburgh.

It would appear he had the honour of an introduction to Voltaire in Paris, which probably produced the admiration of the genius of that extraordinary person, found in some of his subsequent writings. Two allusions are made to this honour; one in a letter in the Public Ledger, another in an account of his life hereafter to be noticed:—

“ I remember to have heard Mr. Voltaire observe in a large company at his house at Monrion, that at the battle of Dettingen the English exhibited prodigies of valour; but they soon lessened their well-bought conquest by lessening the merit of those they had conquered.”

In the memoir, he enters more into detail of his usual manner in conversation:—

“ In the year 1720 Mr. Voltaire came over to England. A previous acquaintance with Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and the Lord Bolingbroke, was sufficient to introduce him among the polite, and his fame as a poet got him the acquaint-

\* A copy of this letter was once in the possession of Mr. Carleton, nephew of the late nobleman of that name, who gave it to a Miss Metcalf, now dead; among whose papers it has not been found. Other copies are known to be in London, but, from some unaccountable illiberality, are withheld.

ance of the learned, in a country where foreigners generally find but a cool reception. He only wanted introduction ; his own merit was enough to procure the rest. As a companion no man ever exceeded him when he pleased to lead the conversation ; which, however, was not always the case. In company which he either disliked or despised, few could be more reserved than he : but when he was warmed in discourse, and had got over a hesitating manner which sometimes he was subject to, it was rapture to hear him. His meagre visage seemed insensibly to gather beauty, every muscle in it had meaning, and his eye beamed with unusual brightness.

“ The person who writes this memoir, who had the honour and the pleasure of being his acquaintance, remembers to have seen him in a select company of wits of both sexes at Paris, when the subject happened to turn upon English taste and learning. Fontenelle, who was of the party, and who, being unacquainted with the language or authors of the country he undertook to condemn, with a spirit truly vulgar began to revile both. Diderot, who liked the English, and knew something of their literary pretensions, attempted to vindicate their poetry and learning, but with unequal abilities. The company quickly perceived that Fontenelle was superior in the dispute, and were surprised at the silence which Voltaire had preserved all the former part of the night, particu-

larly as the conversation turned upon one of his favourite topics.

“Fontenelle continued his triumph till about twelve o'clock, when Voltaire appeared at last roused from his reverie. His whole frame seemed animated. He began his defence with the utmost elegance, mixed with spirit, and now and then let fall the finest strokes of raillery upon his antagonist ; and his harangue lasted till three in the morning. I must confess that, whether from national partiality or from the elegant sensibility of his manner, I never was so much charmed, nor did I ever remember so absolute a victory as he gained in this dispute.”

One of the few allusions to his abode in Paris at this time, is the following from “*Animated Nature*,” vol. v. p. 207. :—

“I never walked out about the environs of Paris, that I did not consider the immense quantity of game that was running almost tame on every side of me, as a badge of the slavery of the people ; and what they wished me to observe as an object of triumph, I always regarded with a kind of secret compassion : yet this people have no game laws for the remoter parts of the kindom.”

By the recommendation of some of the friends found in this capital, he accompanied an English gentleman to Switzerland, taking the route of Strasburgh ; and crossing the Rhine, remained a short time in Germany. At this time therefore, for he is not known to have visited it subsequently, such know-



ledge as he possessed of that country seems to have been acquired ; not, we may believe, of a very minute description, as no sketch of country or people is attempted in the “ Traveller.” The “ Enquiry into Polite Learning ” censures with some justice its innumerable critics and commentators as destructive of true taste and genius ; but the following scene from the learned institutions of that country, although drawn eighty years ago, was even then probably overcharged :—

“ But let the Germans have their due ; if they are often a little dull, no nation alive assumes a more laudable solemnity, or better understands all the little decorums of stupidity. Let the discourse of a professor run on never so heavily, it cannot be irksome to his dozing pupils, who frequently lend him their sympathetic nods of approbation. I have sometimes attended their disputes at gradation. On this occasion they often dispense with learned gravity, and seem really all alive. The disputes are managed between the followers of Cartesius, whose exploded system they call the new philosophy, and those of Aristotle. Though both parties are wrong, they argue with an obstinacy worthy the cause of truth ; Nego, Probo, and Distinguo grow loud. The disputants grow warm ; the moderator cannot be heard, the audience take part in the debate, till at last the whole hall buzzes with erroneous philosophy.”

Entering Switzerland, he visited the falls of Schaffhausen, either at an early period of the year,

or when the season was more than usually late ; for in speaking of rivers, and such cataracts as neither time nor art are likely to remove, he says, "Of this kind are the cataracts of the Rhine, one of which I have seen exhibit a very strange appearance ; it was that at Schaffhausen, which was frozen quite across, and the water stood in columns where the cataract had formerly fallen."\*

In this country he remained for some time, visiting Basle, Berne, and other places of note or interest, but fixing more permanently at Geneva. Every part presented something romantic and gratifying to the eye or the imagination ; and contemplation of such scenery as he had never witnessed, and scarcely conceived, acting upon a susceptible and reflective mind with all the force of novelty and grandeur, seems to have first produced the disposition to clothe his thoughts and observations in the garb of poetry. To a poetical mind the excitement was irresistible. From Switzerland, he expressly tells us, the first sketch of the "Traveller" was sent to his brother.

Hilly countries, which poetical theorists are prone to consider favourable to the production of poets, may perhaps more truly be said rather to draw out their faculty, than to create it. Persons are seldom excited by what is familiar to them ; and a native of mountainous regions cannot be supposed to view with enthusiasm what is daily under his eye. Mountains are not in fact in any country prolific in men

\* *Animated Nature*, vol. i. p. 221. Ed. 1774.

of high mental powers ; genius is rarely developed there ; the people are more rude ; wealth and comfort, which with a few exceptions seem essential to the cultivation of intellect, less frequent ; and the resort of strangers thither, which has its share in contributing to knowledge, only occasional and temporary. Switzerland has not produced her proportion of eminent men ; and if any part of our own country be scant of celebrated names, it is Wales and the Highlands of Scotland.

But to him familiar only with the plains, who has not seen Nature in her grander aspects and varieties, such countries burst upon the view with all the freshness and interest of a new world, and rarely fail powerfully to impress minds the most ignorant and unimpassioned. To the poet and the philosopher they become a study ; create a new train of ideas and associations ; and while the former is tempted to dwell upon the variety, the novelty, and the magnificence of nature, the latter will be not less inquisitive respecting their moral attributes, and their influences on the condition and character of the people. Uniting both characters within himself, Goldsmith sat down to meditate upon and describe what he saw, and under such circumstances the first draught of the “ Traveller ” was made ; with what truth of description and vigour of sentiment need not be said, for he has left little for succeeding poets touching upon the same countries to add. All traces of this sketch, transmitted as he informs us, to his brother Henry in Ireland, and

consisting of about seventy or eighty lines according to current report among his relatives, are now lost ; being considered probably of no further value when the poem had been published.

From Geneva he made excursions on foot to the Alpine ranges in the vicinity, with which he afterwards professed to be very conversant in the knowledge of their localities. The time occupied in this way was the early part of the summer of 1755, as may be inferred from that passage in the “ Traveller” where, in describing the country, we are told, either in allusion to the severity of the season when he was there, or the lateness of spring generally, that

“ No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,  
*But winter lingering chills the lap of May.*”

A more precise statement of the time appears in the “ History of Animated Nature.” Speaking of woodcocks being found in the Alps all the summer, he says, “ I myself have flushed them, on the top of Mount Jura, in June and July.” A few other notices of his familiarity with this region occur in parts of the same work. Adverting to an erroneous though prevalent idea, of the sense of taste being impaired by the state of the air on the tops of mountains, he denies it : “ All substances have their tastes as well on the tops of mountains as in the bottom of the valley ; and I have been one of many who have ate a very savoury dinner on the Alps.” Speaking of sheep on another occa-

sion, he says there is but one proof of their attachment to persons. "What I allude to is their following the sound of the shepherd's pipe. Before I had seen them trained in this manner, I had no conception of those descriptions of the old pastoral poets, of the shepherd leading his flock from one country to another. As I had been used only to see these harmless creatures driven before their keepers, I supposed that all the rest was but invention ; but in many parts of the Alps, and even some provinces of France, the shepherd and his pipe are still continued with true antique simplicity."

At this city he is said to have had consigned to him the care of a young gentleman travelling to the south of France and to Italy ; but the connection according to the same accounts, was dissolved upon the borders of the latter country, the pupil to embark at Marseilles for England, and the tutor to pursue his tour in penury and on foot. The degree of credibility due to this story, repeated by all the early memoir writers, is not precisely ascertained. Bishop Percy without denying its truth, felt disposed to attribute its origin to the story told by the Vicar of Wakefield's son. It is certain it was not among the memoranda dictated to that prelate at Northumberland House ; while it is equally true, that many more important particulars of his life, from the hurried perhaps unpremeditated nature of the communication, were omitted on the same occasion. Such an event, if

it ever occurred, might not have been thought worthy of notice by himself in a statement not meant to be detailed or minute ; or the recollection might have been unpleasant from some circumstances of the quarrel ; or he may have been influenced at this period as we know him to have been on other points, by the reserve, common to most men, of withholding from general knowledge during life the difficulties and struggles which marked its commencement.

That some such connection was formed appears probable, from consideration of all the circumstances :—the habit of the Poet to tell something of himself, however tinged with fiction ; the very probable occurrence of a tutorship, which would enable him to travel to advantage ; the contrasted characters of tutor and pupil, of which the former so much resembled his own ; the seeming truth of the detail, as given in the novel, and the name of the uncle of the youth being known ; and finally, the cause of the premature separation, which from the allusions dropped, and the very different estimates formed of the value of money by the governor and the governed, we may readily believe to have been pecuniary matters. Between the improvident and the parsimonious, there can be no permanent bond of union : if positive antipathy be not engendered between persons of such opposite qualities, their acquaintance never ripens into friendship, for they cannot pardon the peculiarities of each other. The improvidence of the



poor always astonishes the wealthy. The avarice of the rich on the other hand, is ever incomprehensible to the poor ; it is the first peculiarity of character they notice, and probably the last which they forget or forgive ; and in sketching the following character, it is difficult to believe that Goldsmith, whose disposition was so opposite to that of his presumed companion, did not copy from the life :—

“ I was to be the young gentleman’s governor, but with a proviso that he should always be permitted to govern himself. My pupil, in fact, understood the art of guiding in money concerns much better than I. He was the heir to a fortune of about two hundred thousand pounds, left him by an uncle in the West Indies ; and his guardians, to qualify him for the management of it, had bound him apprentice to an attorney. Thus avarice was his prevailing passion ; all his questions on the road were, how money might be saved,—which was the least expensive course to travel,—whether any thing could be bought that would turn to account when disposed of again in London ? Such curiosities on the way as could be seen for nothing, he was ready enough to look at ; but if the sight of them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that he had been told they were not worth seeing. He never paid a bill that he would not observe how amazingly expensive travelling was ; and all this though not yet twenty-one. When arrived at Leghorn, as we took a walk to look at the port

and shipping, he inquired the expense of the passage by sea home to England. This he was informed was but a trifle compared to his returning by land; he was therefore unable to withstand the temptation; so, paying me the small part of my salary that was due, he took leave, and embarked with only one attendant for London."

Italy was now before him: and who, at some period of life, has not yearned to visit a region consecrated in imagination by the remembrance of its ancient reputation? by its poetry, heroism, and power; its literature, oratory, and art?

Descending into Piedmont, we find an allusion to the fact of his acquaintance with that country, in noticing a part of its rural economy, the management of bees, where in the case of flowers being scarce or exhausted in one place, the insects are made to change their neighbourhood for fresh supplies, by a simple and efficacious plan of their owners:—"For a knowledge of this, in some parts of France and Piedmont, they have contrived, as I have often seen, a kind of floating bee-house. They have on board one barge threescore or an hundred bee-hives, well defended from the inclemency of an accidental storm; and with these, the owners suffer themselves to float gently down the river. As the bees are continually choosing their flowery pasture along the banks of the stream, they are furnished with sweets before unrifled; and thus a single floating bee-house yields the proprietor a considerable income. Why a method similar to

this has never been adopted in England, where we have more gentle rivers and more flowery banks than in any other part of the world, I know not ; certainly, it might be turned to advantage, and yield the possessor a secure, though, perhaps, a moderate income."

In his progress he visited Florence, Verona, Mantua, Milan, and, crossing the base of the Peninsula to the eastern shore, frequently meeting what he terms "the wandering Po," found an object of much interest in Venice ; personally, from its connection with the origin of his uncle Contarine's family ; poetically, by associations arising from the popular productions of English genius : though even her accredited history resembles a portion of romance. Carinthia was likewise visited ; and being once questioned by Mr. Hickey on the justice of the censure passed upon a people whom other travellers praised for being as good if not better than their neighbours—

"Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor  
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door,"—

gave as a reason his being once after a fatiguing day's walk, obliged to quit a house he had entered for shelter, and pass part or the whole of the night in seeking another. His progress there is no reason to doubt was attended by much privation, but supported with a spirit that penury and loneliness could not daunt.

At Padua, attracted by its medical and literary reputation, he remained a few months, acquiring

more intimate acquaintance with the language and literature of the people of this portion of Italy. Among the learned, that University then stood high, and the coincidence may be worthy of remark, in men afterwards so celebrated for their talents and intimacy, that Dr. Johnson, when at college, had an ambition to visit the same seat of learning, but only contemplated in prospect what Goldsmith, with more energy, and under the most disadvantageous circumstances, accomplished in person. "Well," said the former, in a loud soliloquy in his room, which happened to be overheard by Dr. Panting then master of Pembroke College, "I have a mind to see what is done in other places of learning. I'll go and visit the universities abroad. *I'll go to France and Italy. I'll go to Padua.* And I'll mind my business."\*

Here he is supposed to have taken his medical degree, although no satisfactory proof of the matter can be gleaned after minute inquiries. But it is suggested by competent authority in such matters, that it may have been obtained in some other university after one of the disputations in their halls, in which by his own admission, he engaged. The record of the names of students in this University, is also said to be defective or lost.

While pursuing professional and general learning, he appears to have examined the character and manners of the nation with some degree of

\* Croker's Boswell, vol. i. p. 42.

minuteness. The result was not favourable to its literary or moral state. In the "Traveller," the "Enquiry into Polite Learning," and in that exquisite specimen of the frivolity of some of their literary, or supposed literary, associations, their "filosofi and virtuosi," first printed in "The Bee," giving an account of the academies of Italy, we see his opinions at length. He found a people more proud of their past, than striving to attain present reputation : *Stat nominis umbra* ; ardent indeed and impassioned in character, but this ardour thrown away rather upon the amusements of life than upon its paramount duties and its business ; the arts valued extremely high ; but men in their social condition, character, and qualities which must ever form the great test of high civilisation, neglected. He found despotic governments, without external strength or internal respectability ; a religion, imposing in its forms, but unsuccessful in securing morality of conduct from the people, and as he says in another place, "with the property of contracting the sphere of the understanding ;" and learning, as he believed, on the decline. When afterwards induced to give utterance to similar opinions in the societies of London, Baretti, Martinelli, and other Italians, took him sharply to task for presuming to characterise a people and country of whom he knew little. Both were occasionally rude to him on this account. But he seems not to have erred materially, or Italy must consider herself peculiarly unfortunate in ap-

pearing in a similar light to most other English travellers.\*

It appears he did not visit Rome or Naples, finding either his resources exhausted, or dreading that the then impending contest between England and France would interfere with the homeward journey through the latter country. Toward the end of 1755 he set out on his return to England. On this occasion his difficulties are believed to have been greater than at any former period; he had now, however, another resource, which when opportunities offered was rendered available for procuring temporary supplies, while it exhibited his ingenuity, practised his memory, and drew forth his stores of learning. It is told in the work of fiction already alluded to, as a resource of the "philosophic vagabond," and was universally understood, and indeed avowed, to apply to himself:—

"My skill in music could avail me nothing in a country (Italy) where every peasant was a better musician than I: but by this time I had acquired another talent, which answered my purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents, there are upon certain days philosophical theses maintained against

\* Lord Orrery, a traveller and a clever man, and with the best opportunities for observation, in a letter from Florence, shortly before (Dec. 1754) seems to have formed no more favourable opinion of the people than Goldsmith:—"The truth is, few parts of Italy abound with men of learning. The clergy rather cultivate the political than the classical sciences, and the nobility cultivate no sciences at all."



every adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, then, I fought my way towards England, walked along from city to city, examined mankind more nearly, and, if I may so express it, saw both sides of the picture."

Convents in most parts of the Continent were at that time pretty numerously tenanted by natives of Ireland; and wherever such were found, he profited by the accidental advantage of birthplace, as well as of his learning, to claim assistance at their hands. That he met acquaintance who may have occasionally supplied his wants, there is no doubt; one instance may be inferred from the following incident, or the allusion may apply to a domestic of his pupil:—" *A friend of mine,*" he says, speaking of the bite of the tarantula in Italy, and the erroneous stories told of its effects and of their reputed mode of cure by dancing, "*had a servant who suffered himself to be bit; the wound, which was little larger than the puncture of a pin, was uneasy for a few hours, and then became well without any further assistance. Some of the country people, however, still make a tolerable livelihood of the credulity of strangers, as the musician finds his account in it not less than the dancer.*"\*

After entering France, his music became again in requisition; more perhaps on the homeward

\* *Animated Nature*, vol. ii. p. 171. Lond. 1774.

than even on the outward journey, as his necessities were greater. Assistance derived from this source could do little more than supply the exigencies of the moment; his wants at other periods must have been pressing; his obligations to individual charity necessarily great and frequent. Writing to his brother-in-law at a future time, we have the admission, in alluding to pecuniary difficulties, in their family,—“ These things give me real uneasiness, and I could wish to redress them: but at present there is hardly a kingdom in Europe in which I am not a debtor.” With something like bitterness of spirit from the recollection of what he had endured, or censure of himself for undertaking such a scheme so ill provided, the supposed adventures in the novel, shadowed out so much resembling his own, are termed those of a “ philosophic vagabond, pursuing novelty and losing content.”

The kindness of the French peasantry impressed him in favour of the nation at large; increased probably by that similarity, obvious to a nice observer, which exists between their general character and that of his own countrymen. He saw and felt perhaps how soon on the soil of France the French and Irish assimilate; so much sooner and closer than the English and French. He could not overlook the same sociability of disposition; the same hospitality and good nature towards strangers; the same lightness of heart and vola-

tility of temper; the same enjoyment of the present and disregard of the future; the same desire “to please and be pleased” with all around them; and even that vanity, or “beggar pride” as he terms it, to appear to others something greater or better than they really are. Nor did the peculiarity probably escape him, that both nations so joyous and generous in their quiet state, should exhibit when excited the extremes of fierceness and cruelty.

While marking the social peculiarities of the people, their political condition was not forgotten; he appears to have clearly observed the slow and almost silent operation of a new and formidable principle at that time taking root in the public mind of France. The prophecy as to the probable results is singular, and proved much nearer its accomplishment than he believed:—“As the Swedes are making concealed approaches to despotism, the French, on the other hand, are imperceptibly vindicating themselves into freedom. When I consider that these Parliaments, the members of which are all created by the Court (the Presidents of which can only act by immediate direction), presume even to mention privileges and freedom, who till of late received directions from the throne with implicit humility; when this is considered, I cannot help fancying that the genius of freedom has entered that kingdom in disguise. If they have but three weak

monarchs more successively on the throne, the mask will be laid aside, and the country will certainly once more be free.”\*

\* It is remarkable that Burke was impressed with the same idea; first in 1768, in his pamphlet in reply to one of Mr. George Grenville; and again in 1771 on his return from a visit to that country. If the coincidence of opinion be accidental, it is curious; but as Goldsmith was prior in time, Burke may have been led to consider the subject by hearing his observations.

## CHAP. VI.

ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND.—EARLY STRUGGLES IN LONDON.—  
BECOMES USHER IN THE SCHOOL OF DR. MILNER AT PECK-  
HAM.—ENGAGES IN THE MONTHLY REVIEW.—DR. JAMES  
GRAINGER.

EARLY in the year 1756 he reached England, having spent about two years on the Continent; and London, as the general resort of talent and necessity, became his first object. Here his prospects were of the most discouraging nature. Whatever advances he had made in learning, or in the knowledge of mankind in the abstract, he had made none in what is more commonly considered the practical business of life. It was doubtful what course to pursue for a livelihood; he was in, to him, a strange land; he possessed neither friends nor money; and laboured under the disadvantage of being an Irishman, which at that period, as he says in one of his letters, formed of itself an obstacle to gaining employment.

Some obscurity exists as to the exact incidents of his life on revisiting England, of the order in which they preceded each other, or whether his first attempt to obtain a livelihood was in the medical or scholastic profession. Much of his earlier career, of what was known to many acquaintance

during his life is now forgotten, although in this and other details he may not have thought it necessary to be explicit to such as were likely to record them ; unwilling to disclose struggles which were unsuccessful or involving details distressing to his pride. Yet we know that hints and allusions fell from him in conversation, casting partial light on parts of his history, which it would have been indelicate nevertheless to pursue by direct questions further than he thought proper to go. After his death, an anonymous contributor to the newspaper stated, that the Poet having been bred to pharmacy had attempted to practise as an apothecary in a country town, but failing of success, proceeded to London and accepted the situation of usher to Dr. Milner. A contradiction to the former part of this account soon appeared, which brought forth the following rejoinder : it must be remembered that the authority is anonymous, although there seems no inducement for wilful misstatement or that the writer had not sufficient authority for what he says :—“ A writer in a daily paper pretends to contradict some part of our account of the late Dr. Goldsmith. He says, the Doctor was not bred to pharmacy, and that he did not set up as an apothecary in a country town *in Ireland*. We never said that he set up *in Ireland*. The country town alluded to is an English town, the name of which is forgotten. But the writer of this and the former paragraph assures the public, that he had the anecdote from the Doctor's own mouth.



As to what the writer mentions of the Doctor having been a student in Edinburgh after he left Ireland, and then travelling into Germany and other parts of Europe, it is very true, and to that circumstance the public is probably indebted for his pretty poem of the 'Traveller.' " \*

A rumour (mentioned by Mr. English who conducted the Annual Register for twenty years after Burke relinquished it) prevailed about the year 1766, of his having once attempted the stage in the line of low comedy, in a country town, when pressed for the means of subsistence. Whether this story was circulated in jest or earnest, may be doubted ; want makes us familiar with strange pursuits as with strange acquaintance ; and as the scheme may have seemed to him to require little preliminary knowledge and no introduction, it is just possible some such resource was tried in making his way from the coast to London, destitute as he avowedly was of money. The greater probability indeed is, that like some other stories told of him it had no foundation, or was conjectured from the seeming knowledge of such a life shown in the " Adventures of a Strolling Player," printed in the British Magazine, where the scene is placed in Kent ; or from the conclusion of the story of George Primrose. It is however true that he was afterwards known to express desire to play as a piece of admirable low comedy, the character of Scrub in " The Beaux Stratagem."

\* St. James's Chronicle, April 12—14. 1774.

As far as can be ascertained, after reaching London his first determination seems to have been to turn his classical knowledge to account as usher in a school. With this view he made application to one of those establishments under a feigned name; ashamed, as it appears, of an occupation from which he soon hoped to escape, and which by this device might never be known. A reference as to character was however required, and knowing none in England to whom to apply, he gave the name of the gentleman already mentioned, Dr. Radcliff of Dublin; but at the same time wrote to that gentleman himself, requesting him to give *no* answer to the inquiry of the schoolmaster. The reason of this we may readily conceive: having given a wrong name at first expecting to be received without reference, he could not without hazard of total rejection afterwards acknowledge the deception; he sought besides, merely temporary shelter, which was probably afforded until the answer from Dublin should arrive, trusting in the mean time that his attainments and moral conduct would establish their own character; while as it was obvious that Doctor Radcliff could not recommend a fictitious person, no answer from him was better than direct denial of all knowledge of the applicant.

This story was told soon after the death of the Poet, by a writer of credit from a then living authority. In the statements mingled with it however several errors crept in, in consequence of few authentic particulars of the Poet's life being then

(1776) known ; thus the real place of his birth is thought to have been Roscommon ; and he is believed to have lived in England previous to visiting the Continent : while the interval between the two applications to Dr. Radcliff, instead of being passed in travelling, as this writer thinks, were really spent in London ; that is, between 1756, when seeking the ushership, and 1758, when he wrote again to that gentleman, soliciting aid in procuring subscriptions for one of his forthcoming works. That his adventures as related by him to that gentleman were, as is here said amusing, we may readily believe : situated as he was while on the Continent, they must from any pen have possessed no ordinary interest ; and from his own, ever abundant in humour and ease, no doubt a peculiar charm. Nor from a correspondent, to whom he stood partly in the relation of pupil, and who had known his previous struggles in Dublin, would he probably conceal much which it might not be necessary to disclose to others.

“ This county ” (Roscommon), writes the Rev. Dr. Thomas Campbell, whose connection with Bishop Percy in drawing up a memoir of the Poet has been mentioned, “ boasts of a still greater honour, the birth of the much-lamented Oliver Goldsmith. I have learned a very curious anecdote of this extraordinary man, from the widow of a Dr. Radcliff, who had been his tutor in Trinity College, Dublin. She mentioned to me a very long letter from him, which she had often heard

her husband read to his friends upon the commencement of Goldsmith's celebrity. But this, with other things of more value, was unfortunately lost by an accidental fire since her husband's death. It appears that the beginning of his career was one continued struggle against adversity. Upon his first going to England, he was in such distress, that he would have gladly become an usher to a country school ; but so destitute was he of friends to recommend him, that he could not without difficulty obtain even this low department. The master of the school scrupled to employ him without some testimonial of his past life. Goldsmith referred him to his tutor at college for a character ; but all this while he went under a feigned name. From this resource, therefore, one would think that little in his favour could be ever hoped for. But he only wanted to serve a present exigency ;—an ushership was not his object.

“ In this straight, he wrote a letter to Dr. Radcliff, imploring him, as he tendered the welfare of an old pupil, not to answer a letter which he would probably receive the same post with his own from the schoolmaster. He added that he had good reasons for concealing both from him and the rest of the world his name, and the real state of his case ; every circumstance of which he promised to communicate upon some future occasion. His tutor, embarrassed enough to know what answer he should give, resolved at last to give none. And thus was poor Goldsmith snatched from between the

horns of his present dilemma, and suffered to drag on a miserable life for a few probationary months. It was not till after his return from his rambles over great part of the world, and after having got some footing on this slippery globe, that he at length wrote to Dr. Radcliff to thank him for not answering the schoolmaster's letter, and to fulfil his promise of giving the history of the whole transaction. It contained a comical narrative of his adventures from leaving Ireland to that time. His musical talents had procured him a welcome reception wherever he went. My authority says, that her husband admired this letter more than any part of his works. But she would not venture to trust her memory in detailing particulars, which, after all, could not be so interesting but from his own manner of stating them."\*

The situation of the school where he obtained temporary relief from absolute want, is not remembered: by some it was said to be Yorkshire, probably from his familiar acquaintance with parts of that county evinced in conversation; from other circumstances there is more reason to believe it Kent, and in the neighbourhood of Tenterden or Ashford, the journey to which from London would be also more within the reach of his finances. How long he continued is likewise unknown. The silence of Dr. Radcliff no doubt augured ill in the eyes

\* "Historical Survey of the South of Ireland." 8vo. Lond. 1777. pp. 286—289.

of his employer ; and very simple perhaps rather homely manners, a distressed condition, and rugged appearance, were little calculated to remove any unfavourable impression. The consideration shown him in the school under such circumstances was not likely to be great : his pride seconded by disgust at the occupation, probably took the alarm ; and he was soon therefore again in London, equally friendless and distressed as before, but with a recollection of the miseries of his employment that breaks out in various parts of his writings, and the application of which to his personal peculiarities, is immediately obvious in the supposed treatment of an usher : —

“ The truth is, in spite of all their labours to please, they are generally the laughing-stock of the school. Every trick is played upon the usher ; *the oddity of his manners, his dress, or his language, are a fund of eternal ridicule* ; the master himself now and then cannot avoid joining in the laugh, and the poor wretch, eternally resenting this ill usage, seems to live in a state of warfare with all the family.”\* — “ After all the fatigues of the day,” he was in the habit of saying on other occasions, “ the poor usher of an academy is obliged to sleep in the same bed with a Frenchman, a teacher of that language to the boys ; who disturbs him every night an hour, perhaps, in papering and filleting his hair, and stinks worse than a carrion, with his rancid pomatums when he lays his head beside him on the bolster.”

\* Works, vol. i. Bee, No. VI. Essay on Education.



“Upon my arrival in town, Sir,” we are again told in his novel, “my first care was to deliver your letter of recommendation to our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than I. My first scheme, you know, Sir, was to be usher at an academy, and I asked his advice on the affair. Our cousin received the proposal with a true sardonic grin. ‘Ay,’ cried he, ‘this is indeed a very pretty career that has been chalked out for you. I have been an usher at a boarding school myself; and may I die by an anodyne necklace, but I had rather be under-turnkey in Newgate. *I was up early and late: I was browbeat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys within, and never permitted to stir out to receive civility abroad. But are you sure you are fit for a school? Let me examine you a little. Have you been bred apprentice to the business? ‘No.’ ‘Then you won’t do for a school. Can you dress the boys’ hair?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then you won’t do for a school. Have you had the small pox?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then you won’t do for a school. Can you lie three in a bed?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then you will never do for a school. Have you got a good stomach?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Then you will by no means do for a school.’”*

His dependence now for a livelihood rested on such professional acquirements as circumstances had best enabled him to make. Application was therefore made to several apothecaries for the situation of assistant, but the same obstacles that

operated against him at the academy prevented his reception here. Ultimately a chemist, said to have been named Jacob, and residing at the corner of Monument or Bell Yard, on Fish Street Hill, taking compassion on his destitute condition, and pleased with the degree of chemical science he displayed, admitted him into his establishment.\* Here he remained only a few months. Hearing that Dr. Sleigh was in London, he called to renew his acquaintance, and was received with every demonstration of regard, or, in the words put into his mouth by a gentlemant† who knew him for several years, he is said to have described their interview in the following manner;—"But notwithstanding it was Sunday, and it is to be supposed in my best clothes, Sleigh scarcely knew me—such is the tax the unfortunate pay to poverty. However, when he did recollect me, I found his heart as warm as ever, and he shared his purse and friendship with me during his continuance in London."

At this time it appears he had not acquainted his friends in Ireland with his situation, a previous application to that quarter for pecuniary aid having failed; rather from want of the means, as it would seem, than diminution of their regard. His dis-

\* The late Richard Sharp, Esq. remembered to have had the house pointed out to him, as he informed the writer, in early life, with an anecdote or two of the poet which he had since forgotten.

† Mr. William Cooke, the barrister; author of an *Essay on the "Dramatic Art,"* and "*Conversation,*" a poem.

tress before being engaged by the chemist, was therefore no doubt extreme, and such as with all his buoyancy of spirit, to have produced the most gloomy reflections. In a subsequent letter to Mr. Hodson it will be seen he states his difficulties in being "left without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence," and claims some merit for not having had recourse to the "friar's cord or the suicide's halter." If he was ever reduced in England to mingle with the lowest description of society, it was probably at this time; for a late writer\* asserts, on the authority as he says of the late Mr. George Langton, that Goldsmith to the surprise of a circle of good company, once began a story in these words: "When I lived among the beggars of Axe Lane." In this there may be some mistake or exaggeration; the unguarded nature of the man may have let fall expressions implying acquaintance with the habits of such persons, but not probably in the exact terms here put into his mouth.

By the friendship of Dr. Sleigh and a few other acquaintance found in London, he was enabled to establish himself as physician, in a humble way, in Bankside, Southwark. Humility of appearance is not very favourable to success in physic: his poorer neighbours indeed found him useful; but the rich who could alone contribute to his support, usually expect some external display of wealth as one

\* Best's Personal Recollections, p. 76.

of the evidences of successful practice in the candidate for their confidence, because they rarely know any thing of his qualifications. His address likewise wanted that polish, while his honesty and candour despised that intrigue, which some of his brethren find convenient substitutes for talents. He had leisure however to turn his attention to literature, which formed there is reason to believe a more favourite pursuit; and it possessed this advantage over his profession, that the exertion of industry and talent were sure of procuring at least some return, while in the former they could *command* none. The assistance received from Sleigh, who though kind had little to spare, could not be considerable, and when he left London it necessarily ceased. Goldsmith was therefore thrown upon such resources as his ingenuity could supply.

It was about this period he became acquainted with Richardson, the celebrated novelist: how, it does not clearly appear; but Dr. Kippis who knew him early in London, mentioned having a vague impression on his mind that Goldsmith while in practice had been professionally attentive to one of the men employed in Richardson's printing office, who lived in his vicinity, and that this accidental occurrence led to further intercourse. Such an acquaintance, at once an admired author and an eminent printer, promised to be advantageous to a young writer making his first start into literature, and the opportunity we may believe was not neglected. That he was ever received into the

family of the latter on a footing of particular intimacy is doubtful: the physician was then unknown and poor; the printer at the summit of reputation, and competently rich; and as there seems no reason to doubt that in the intervals of professional employment the former acted occasionally in his establishment as corrector of the press, a fact known also to Boswell though he does not state to whom, we may believe that he shared the hospitality and society of his employer. It was likewise through this channel, and about this time, that he became known to Dr. Young, author of the "Night Thoughts;" an honour of which he was afterwards accustomed, and justly, to boast.

His connection with Richardson which has been questioned, seems nevertheless to be confirmed by an interview nearly at the same time with his Edinburgh friend Dr. Farr, who related their meeting in the following terms:—

"From the time of Goldsmith's leaving Edinburgh in the year 1754, I never saw him till the year 1756, when I was in London attending the hospitals and lectures. Early in January\* he called upon me one morning before I was up, and on my entering the room, I recognised my old acquaintance, dressed in a rusty full-trimmed black suit, with his pockets full of papers, which instantly reminded me of the poet in Garrick's farce of

\* It is likely there is some mistake here; the period must have been later in the spring, or it is possible the year may have been 1757.

‘Lethe.’ After we had finished our breakfast, he drew from his pocket a part of a tragedy, which he said he had brought for my correction ; in vain I pleaded inability, when he began to read, and every part on which I expressed a doubt as to the propriety was immediately blotted out. I then more earnestly entreated him not to trust to my judgment, but to the opinion of persons better qualified to decide on dramatic composition ; on which he told me he had submitted his production, so far as he had written to Mr. Richardson, the author of ‘Clarissa,’ on which I peremptorily declined offering another criticism upon the performance.

“The name and subject of the tragedy have unfortunately escaped my memory ; neither do I recollect with exactness how much he had written, though I am inclined to believe that he had not completed the third act : I never heard whether he afterwards finished it. In this visit, I remember his relating a strange Quixotic scheme he had in contemplation of going to decipher the inscriptions on the *written mountains*, though he was altogether ignorant of Arabic, or the language in which they might be supposed to be written. The salary of 300*l.* per annum, which had been left for the purpose, was the temptation.”

No trace of this production remains, or seems to have been known to his literary friends ; the probability therefore is, that being unsatisfactory to himself or to such as he thought proper to consult, it was destroyed : but the anecdote is characteristic



of the same docility to criticism he ever displayed. An author is almost necessarily self-willed ; what costs him some labour to execute, he is naturally willing to preserve ; and the art to blot, though a necessary, is often a painful operation ; neither can he be sure, unless the literary authority be high, that the judgment which simply corrects is superior to that which conceives and constructs ; and when a man of undoubted genius submits to it, we have proof at least of praiseworthy modesty.

The anecdote is likewise worthy of notice as furnishing another instance of the frequent practice of young poets to start in the race for public applause with a tragedy ; adventuring thus in their literary nonage upon an effort which experience and the most cultivated powers only can hope to render worthy of general approbation. An opinion indeed has gone forth and obtained extensive, almost universal, assent, that it is easier for a young author to write a good tragedy than a good comedy. Yet judging from previous examples, what is the fact ? The most popular comedies on the English stage, those of Congreve, Farquhar, and Sheridan, were written when their authors were comparatively young men ; while on the other hand there is scarcely an instance, perhaps indeed not one, of a tragedy written by an inexperienced writer, keeping possession of the stage or even exciting any high degree of admiration in the closet.

An acquaintance from Ireland already familiar

to the reader, also recognised the Poet in the metropolis in the same year. "My father," writes the Rev. Thomas Beatty, Rector of Moira in Ireland, in communication on this subject, "met Goldsmith in London during a visit to that capital, about the year 1756. He was dressed, according to the fashion of the day, in a suit of green and gold, but old and tarnished; and his shirt and neckcloth appeared to have been worn at least a fortnight. He said he was practising physic, and doing very well."

A ludicrous story told of him at this period afterwards reached the ears of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who repeated it to one of their mutual friends, a lady, who, to the delight of her acquaintance, can still detail the anecdote, and through whom it is with much more information, communicated to the reader. In conformity to the prevailing garb of the day for physicians, Goldsmith, unable probably to obtain a new, had procured a second-hand, velvet coat; but either from being deceived in the bargain or by subsequent accident, a considerable breach in the left breast was obliged to be repaired by the introduction of a new piece. This had not been so neatly done, as not to be apparent to the close observation of his acquaintance, and such persons as he visited in the capacity of medical attendant: willing, therefore, to conceal what is considered too obvious a symptom of poverty, he was accustomed to place his hat over the patch, and retain it there carefully during the

visit ; but this constant position becoming noticed, and the cause being soon known, occasioned no little merriment at his expense.

While struggling for an existence which we may well believe precarious, he found amusement in the society of such former fellow students in Edinburgh as accident threw in his way, some of whom, like himself, were seeking an establishment in London. Among others was the son of Dr. John Milner, a dissenting minister, who kept a classical school of eminence at Peckham, in Surrey. Satisfied of his fitness for the situation, and desirous of advancing the interests of his family, as well as of relieving what he soon perceived to be the destitute condition of his friend, this gentleman proposed to Goldsmith to officiate for a time in charge of the establishment of his father, then suffering under severe illness. The proposition was accepted : it ensured until something better should offer, at least security from starvation, “ for all his ambition,” as he says on another occasion, “ was now to live ;” while the circumstances under which it was offered, promised a considerate attention to his comforts and feelings, of which on a previous occasion he had found the want.

His removal thither, supposed by Bishop Percy to have taken place in 1758, really occurred toward the end of 1756, or the beginning of the following year. Miss Milner, daughter of his employer, asserted so lately as the beginning of the present century, that he continued about three years in their

house : this we know from the evidence of his own letters to be in part erroneous, excepting we believe, what is not unlikely to have occurred from the illness of Milner being of a fluctuating and protracted nature, that his residence was rather occasional than constant. She likewise said he came to them from Richardson, with whom he had some, she knew not what, connection, and of whom he spoke in terms of regard. By the verbal account of Mrs. Hodson to Mr. Handcock, the first letter of her brother to his relatives after quitting the Continent was written from this school.

All that is distinctly remembered of him here may be comprised within a short detail. He was considered to be, according to Miss Milner, what he scoffingly alludes to in his writings as one of his own negative qualifications, *very good-natured* ; played tricks somewhat familiar, and occasionally a little coarse, upon the servants and boys ; told very entertaining stories ; and found frequent amusement in his flute. With the scholars he was a favourite, being ever ready to indulge them in certain, not very expensive indeed, school-boy dainties whenever his pecuniary means admitted ; and he was not over strict in that discipline which, however necessary to observe, a man of amiable disposition occasionally feels reluctant to enforce. His benevolent feelings appeared always active ; mendicants rarely quitted him without relief ; and a tale of distress roused all his sympathies. His small supplies were thus exhausted frequently before the

stated salary became due, when Mrs. Milner would say to him with a smile, upon application for an advance,—“ You had better, Mr. Goldsmith, let me take care of your money, as I do for some of the young gentlemen ;” to which he would reply, in the same spirit of good humour, “ In truth, madam, there is equal need.”

One of the pupils particularly noticed by him for possessing promising talents, and who ever after felt a strong regard for his tutor, was the late Samuel Bishop, Esq. of London\*, in whose family a few traditional notices of his peculiarities are still remembered. Always sociable and ready to join in whatever was going forward, his good-nature led him to mingle in the sports of the boys, and submit to their wit or even their reproof for occasional want of dexterity. In such a rude community, however, familiarity has its disadvantages by the opening it affords to youthful insubordination or impertinence, an instance of which is recorded. When amusing his younger companions during play hours with the flute, and expatiating on the pleasures derived from music, in addition to its advantages in society as a gentlemanlike acquirement, a pert boy, looking at his situation and personal disadvantages with something of contempt, rudely replied to the effect that *he* surely could not consider himself a gentleman ; an offence

\* Father of the Rev. W. Bishop, Rector of Upton, Berkshire ; Rev. H. Bishop ; and Dr. Bishop, of Oxford.

which, though followed by instant chastisement, disconcerted and pained him extremely.

Of that simplicity or absence of mind so well known as one of his characteristics, Mr. Bishop mentioned an amusing instance when they met several years afterwards in the streets of London ; for which and the preceding anecdote the writer is indebted to his son, the Rev. H. Bishop, Chaplain to the Archbishop of Dublin :—

“ After an interval of some years, my father, while walking in London with my mother, to whom he was just married, met Goldsmith, and addressing him, an immediate recognition took place. The tutor was delighted to see his former pupil, and expressed great pleasure at the introduction to his wife. Still the associations in his mind of their former school connexion was too strong to be overcome. ‘ Come, my boy,’ said he, addressing my father by his Christian name, ‘ I am delighted to see you ; I must treat you to something ; what shall it be ? will you have some apples ?’ and immediately turned to the display of fruit furnished by a basket woman who stood near.

“ In the course of conversation, he mentioned his picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which had been recently engraved ; and immediately added, ‘ Have you seen it, Sam ? Have you got an engraving ?’ My father not to appear negligent of the rising fame of his old preceptor replied, that he had not yet procured it ; he was just furnishing his house, but had fixed upon the spot the print was to occupy



as soon as he was ready to receive it. 'Sam,' he said, with some emotion, 'if your picture had been published, I should not have suffered an hour to elapse without procuring it.' After some further conversation, the sense of this seeming neglect was appeased by apologies. He promised to visit the young couple as soon as they should be settled; but this promise, I believe, was never fulfilled."

At the table of Dr. Milner, he became acquainted with Mr. (afterwards Doctor) Griffiths, then a bookseller in Paternoster-row, and projector and proprietor of the Monthly Review. Literary topics were, as may be supposed from Milner also being an occasional writer, frequently discussed, in which Goldsmith took part, and proved himself so well qualified to decide upon subjects of general literature, his previous tastes and pursuits being also known, that after a few specimens of criticism furnished from Peckham, he was engaged as a regular writer in the Review. The terms were, his board and lodging in the house of the bookseller, with an adequate salary; the engagement, which appears to have commenced in April 1757, to continue for a year.

A shorter period sufficed for the inclinations of both; at the end of five months, it was dissolved by mutual consent; Goldsmith being tired of his employer or employment, and Griffiths of an inmate less industrious or submissive than probably he had been induced to expect. The drudgery of

the occupation, not less irksome than that of the school, required in fact with almost as much restraint upon his time, more unremitting labour of body and mind. Writing, though one of the most delightful of amusements, is the most laborious of trades. To sit down daily to furnish the stated number of pages for a periodical journal,—to work, whether disposed or not, whether suffering under a diseased body or jaded mind,—to rack invention and memory in order to furnish the expected amount of information to the reader, the customary supplies of wisdom and wit, of research, judgment, and taste—can be no easy or enviable employment. Between a methodical man like the bookseller, and a man without method like the critic, there was not likely to be much community of feeling. They therefore parted; but however dissatisfied with each other, as was afterwards sufficiently obvious, not as it would seem, in open hostility at the moment.

Goldsmith declared that he wrote daily from nine o'clock till two, and often, as he sometimes added, during the whole of the day; that he experienced little personal consideration at the hands of his employer, and few comforts from the arrangements of his wife; and that the latter, as well as the former, interfered with the articles written for the Review, in a manner that made the labour greater and less agreeable; that desirous to impart more elegance to such as he wrote, their taste or neces-

sities required at his hands quantity more than quality ; and that his employer wished to assume the patron or master more than he thought becoming, or would permit from one in all respects his inferior.

In the course of the inquiries necessary for this work, it became known to the writer that the least probable of these statements was nevertheless correct, namely, that the publisher and *his wife* both interfered in altering the articles written for the Review ; the fact, it appears by the following extract of a letter, was previously known to others, avowed guardians of his fame.

“ Having mentioned Griffiths,” writes Dr. Campbell to Bishop Percy (June 30th, 1790), “ I will confess to you that the circumstance of him and his wife (I mean their altering and interpolating Goldsmith’s criticisms on books for the Review), puzzles me. It is one of the most valuable anecdotes before me, and my conscience bids me report it ; but my fears whisper to me that all the Reviews will abuse me for so doing. But who’s afraid ?” The courage assumed in the last sentence was not exhibited ; for neither he nor the Bishop alluded to so curious an incident. Griffiths was then and long afterwards alive ; and it furnishes a curious example of moral pusillanimity on the one hand, or the extent of literary tyranny on the other, that an important fact in the biography of a distinguished writer, tending to his vindication on a particular

point, should be suppressed by a writer of his memoirs from the dread of offending Reviews.\*

Griffiths, who by the account of one of his connexions to the writer, "was a man of strong, shrewd, good sense, but not of much refinement or cultivation," may have been unable to understand the sensitive feelings of his dependent, or have found some cause of complaint either in his want of diligence or of regular habits, neither of which necessarily impeached the rectitude of his general conduct. Where the exact portion of labour cannot be defined, there will frequently be misunderstanding between the employer and the employed; and the habits of men may border on irregularity without being morally wrong. Thus, Dr. Johnson, as we know, permitted peculiarities to grow upon him which occasioned inconvenience to those with whom he became an inmate; and Goldsmith may have given way to similar infirmities, scarcely conscious they formed cause of serious

\* In the skirmishing that occurred between the rival Reviews for some years after the establishment of the Critical Review, allusions occur to this fact: — "The Critical Review is not written by a parcel of obscure hirelings, under the restraint of a bookseller and his wife, who presume to revise, alter, and amend the articles occasionally." "The principal writers in the Critical Review are unconnected with booksellers, unawed by old women, and independent of each other." Griffiths is repeatedly called "an illiterate bookseller." (Crit. Rev. Feb. 1759.) In the following month, in the article on Rowe's Fluxions, there is another reference, either meant for Griffiths or his wife, to "a certain antiquated female critic of the Monthly Review."

offence. Studious men, even of the highest order, occasionally make late hours the favourite period of relaxation ; but in that class among whom he was now thrown, consisting chiefly of the secondary sort, — condemned too often to a life of shifts and expedients, and who diverge more widely from the rules of strict prudence the more uncertain their means of subsistence become, — he found little else. The temptation to join them was therefore sometimes unavoidable. “You cannot,” he says to his brother-in-law soon afterwards, “expect regularity in one who is regular in nothing. Nay, were I to love you by rule, I dare venture to say I could never do it sincerely. Take me then with all my faults.”

His connexion with the Review being known to various friends, an opinion prevailed among them, on hearing him complain of the unfavourable spirit evinced towards his writings at a subsequent time in that work, that he had been formerly its Editor or chief conductor. This was also stated after his death, but denied in that journal. The contradiction appears in noticing a short memoir of him published on that occasion, while his general services as a coadjutor in criticism are admitted :—“Whether the Doctor’s biographer and warm panegyrist, who professes to write from personal knowledge, is right or wrong in his account of our poet’s adventures in his travels abroad, we know not ; but we are authorized to say that he is much mistaken

in his assertion, that Dr. Goldsmith was once employed to *superintend* the Monthly Review. The Doctor had his merit as a man of letters; but, alas! those that knew him must smile at the idea of such a superintendent of a concern which most obviously required some degree of prudence, as well as a competent acquaintance with the world. It is, however, true that he had for a while a seat at our board; and that, so far as his knowledge of books extended, he was not an unuseful assistant.\*

The articles which came from his pen in that work, and the precise period when they were furnished, have been hitherto unknown; neither he nor Griffiths being very communicative on the subject in conversation. But the latter has left this information on record behind him: his own copy of the work, now in the possession of a gentleman with the largest and rarest private collection in the kingdom, contains the necessary references; and by the intervention of a friend†, to whom literature and antiquities are under various obligations, the writer is indebted for the opportunity of making known what is a fair object of literary curiosity.

\* Monthly Review, August, 1774.—Notice of the Life of Dr. Oliver Goldsmith.

† Thomas Amyot, Esq., Treasurer of the Antiquarian Society, F.R.S. The possessor of the work was the late Mr. Heber, whose liberality in opening all his literary stores to such as were in want of them, must be remembered with honour.



To each article in the Review its proprietor, in the copy kept for private use, affixed the initial letter of the name of the contributor; and where two began with the same, one or more other letters, so as to guide those acquainted with the literary history of the day to a pretty accurate conclusion. The list of his coadjutors, in 1757, is not deficient in weight or talent. Thus, R—— was Dr. Rose, of Chiswick (connected with Griffiths by their marrying sisters), who chiefly took the theological department; R——d, Owen Ruffhead, that on law and constitutional history; Ra——, Ralph, the well-known political writer; Sh——, Dr. Gregory Sharpe; La——, probably Langhorne the poet; K——s, K—pp—s, and perhaps K. (for Griffiths is not regular in the letters used), Dr. Kippis; Cl——d, probably Cleland; Ok——, Okey; G——r, Grainger the poet; beside others with the letters L.; W.; B.; B——t; G.; D.; less certainly ascertained. Kenrick immediately succeeded to Goldsmith's place in the Review. His articles, noted K—n—k, are very numerous.

There are three writers whose names begin with the letter G. Where standing singly, it is believed to designate the contributions of Griffiths himself, consisting chiefly of extracts from books of general knowledge, with little attempt at original remark, to which even if not young in the business of reviewing, his business necessarily precluded much attention. These articles are long, the subjects easy: and at a time when the Review was not

very profitable, we may believe he was not disposed to pay another for doing what filled up so much space with so little labour to himself, or as we are told, to his wife.\* The contributions of Grainger are marked G—r, or Gr—r. Those of Goldsmith vary more in the letters employed, from being written at different times, as the hurry or whim of the moment dictated, without uniformly referring to the previous marks affixed to each. Thus we have Gold—, Golds—h, G—s—th, G—sm—, G—ds—, G—th, Go—th, Go—h; and the correctness of these notations are sufficiently verified by internal evidence.

The first article to which his name is annexed appears in April, 1757, among the short notices of small and temporary publications of the Monthly Catalogue, in characterising a political squib, “The Rival Politicians; or the Fox Triumphant: a fable betwixt a Lion, a Wolf, and a Fox.” The criticism, if not very elegant or witty, is at least short, and may be quoted as an instance of homely beginning in this department of literature: the letters appended to it by Griffiths are “Gold—.” “Were this piece strung up against a dead wall, it might catch the passing ’prentice hugely: but then we would advise a title somewhat better adapted to its merits, as well as its situation; as thus,—‘The Triumphant Fox’s Garland; plainly

\* As a specimen, see the notice of “Smith’s History of the County of Kerry,” December, 1757.

declaring how the Wolf was most falsely flayed alive before his own face,' " &c. &c.

A more important paper of his in the same month is an analysis of "Remains of the Mythology and Poetry of the Celtes," by Professor Mallet, of Copenhagen; a subject in which Goldsmith took considerable interest from what he had heard or remembered of Celtic stories and superstitions in Ireland, and on which he is believed to have written essays at a subsequent time in other periodical publications. It formed the third of a series lately commenced in the Review, "The Foreign Article;" and is plainly designated by the word Golds—h. A preliminary printed note, however, introduces it thus:—"The following paper was sent us by the gentleman who signs D., and who we hope will excuse our striking out a few paragraphs for the sake of brevity." On referring to the previous foreign articles signed as here stated, they are marked G—r, meaning Grainger. A discrepancy, therefore, exists between the private mark of the proprietor and the printed memorandum, in which the former no doubt is correct; the latter an error of the person who superintended the press, and who was unacquainted with the new contributor.

In May we have his reviews of "Douglas, a Tragedy," which is characterised in the same terms always used, as "not rising above mediocrity," and "The Connoisseur," which is praised;

also two in the foreign article,—“Specimens of such Plants as are most curious in Piedmont;” and “Literary News,” dated from Padua; so that his time in Italy, judging from these specimens of remark and information, was not unemployed. These are succeeded by no less than twenty-three notices of minor works in the Monthly Catalogue, all bearing his name; and this busy month concludes with a review of Burke’s Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful,—a clever analysis, occupying eight pages, and showing the critic to be a dexterous and ready workman. Whether he knew the author personally at this time is doubtful; that he may have been informed of his name, and remembered him as a college contemporary, is probable. The remarks are couched in a spirit of courtesy, and probably of real admiration, though not of indiscriminate assent to his positions; while the conclusion offers something like an apology for differing in opinion with so tasteful and pleasing a writer. This amicable meeting as reviewer and reviewed, may have been the precursor of their personal friendship. Burke, as was said afterwards, repaid the obligation in kind.

The June number supplies notices of “Smith’s History of New York,”—“The Military Operations in North America,”—“Saxe’s Memoirs on the Art of War,”—“Smollett’s History of England,” in which he regrets the want of “manly and sensible observations, which the writer was so well able to give,” but praises his style as “clear, nervous, and

flowing,"—and the "Foreign Article." Nine of his notices appear in the monthly catalogue; others which have no letters affixed may own the same origin. The account of "Keysler's Travels," in the appendix to the half-yearly volume, comes likewise from his pen.

In July appear "Layard on the Contagion among the Cattle,"—"Translation of Cardinal de Polignac's Anti-Lucretius,"—"Hanway's Eight Days' Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston-upon-Thames." Most readers of literary history remember how sharply Dr. Johnson animadverted on this work, especially on the traveller's injudicious and singular hostility to the use of tea; the sneering tone of which criticism in the second part was never forgiven by that otherwise amiable man, though even then he was known to be wrong and Johnson right. Similar belief—and the coincidence may be noticed—is expressed by Goldsmith, in the harmless effects of that temperate beverage; and as he did not then know Johnson, he is not to be considered as influenced by his decision. The criticism concludes with the following just and sensible remarks:—"Yet after all, why so violent an outcry against this devoted article of modern luxury? Every nation that is rich hath had, and will have, its favourite luxuries. Abridge the people in one, they generally run into another; and the reader may judge which will be most conducive to either mental or bodily health,—the watery beverage of a modern fine lady; or the strong beer, and stronger waters, of her

great-grandmother." In the monthly catalogue four of his notices are marked ; "Memoirs of Madame Maintenon,"—"The Mother-in-law, or Innocent Sufferer,"—"The Fair Citizen,"—"Buchanan's New English Dictionary."

In August, his contributions were, on "Rabener's Satirical Letters,"—"Letters from an Armenian in Ireland to his Friends at Trebisond,"—Letter (his own), of eleven pages, to the authors of the Monthly Review on "Voltaire's Universal History,"—"The Contest in America between Great Britain and France."

September contains only two papers—on the "Epigoniad" of Wilkie, and "Odes of Gray." In the former, only two introductory pages of criticism are noted as his ; the remainder, consisting chiefly of quotations, remarks on defective verses, repetitions of the same rhyme, and other faults of the poem, has simply the letter G. affixed, implying, as there seems no doubt, that they were the works of Griffiths himself.

Here, for the present, his labours in the service of that journal ceased. He could not, however, desert literature, although, as we shall see, displeased with criticism ; and we find him, by a letter written to Mr. Hodson about two months afterwards, conjoining his two professions for a livelihood. "By a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live." Poet was then frequently used as the generic name for author ; and his pieces were probably of that mis-



cellaneous nature which, produced on an emergency for periodical works, seldom survive the occasion : it is certain he did not himself think fit to bring into renewed existence what at this period came from his pen. Still, as he wrote much, we are anxious to trace on what topics he was occupied ; and would rather be permitted to judge of their merits for ourselves whether we can afford to lose any thing of such a writer. Dr. Kippis, who wrote in the Review and knew him, was impressed by some faint recollection of his having made translations from the French ; among others, of a tale of Voltaire ; but the name and date were forgotten. He was however gradually making his way, laying the foundation of his fame, and acquiring the rapidity necessary to an author by profession, in aid of that elegance, that “ grace beyond the reach of art,” bestowed only by nature upon her favourites, and in itself no indifferent evidence of genius.

There are reasons for believing that one of the original pieces from his pen at this time was an enlargement of the paper on the merits of the English poets, said to have been first drawn up in Ireland at the desire of Mr. Contarine. It is called a “ Poetical Scale ;” and is an estimate, arranged in columns, with a variety of remarks subjoined, on the relative ranks held by the greater English poets in the requisites of genius, judgment, learning, and versification. The point of perfection in each is supposed to be twenty degrees, of which

nineteen only have been attained by any of our writers. Thus Shakspeare is estimated to be, as in genius 19, judgment 14, learning 14, versification 19; Milton, in genius 18, judgment 16, learning 17, versification 18; Dryden, in genius 18, judgment 16, learning 17, versification 18; Pope, in genius 18, judgment 18, learning 15, versification 18: an arrangement of their respective powers obviously fanciful and imperfect, but conveying sufficiently the opinions of the writer. The idea is of older date.

This paper appeared in January 1758, in the Literary Magazine; a publication commenced by Mr. John Newbery in May 1756, and which Dr. Johnson superintended or contributed to for fifteen months, discontinuing his assistance about September 1757, nearly at the same moment that Goldsmith quitted the Review. The spirit of the article, and the severity of the remarks made upon Milton in comparing him with Shakspeare\*,

\* "The faults of Shakspeare were those of genius, those of Milton of the man of genius. The former arises from imagination getting the better of judgment: the latter from habit getting the better of imagination. Shakspeare's faults were those of a great poet; those of Milton of a little pedant. When Shakspeare is execrable, he is so exquisitely so that he is as inimitable in his blemishes as in his beauties. The puns of Milton betray a narrowness of education and a degeneracy of habit. His theological quibbles and perplexed speculations are daily equalled and excelled by the most abject enthusiasts; and if we consider him as a prose writer, he has neither the learning of a scholar nor the manners of a gentleman. There is no force in his reasoning, no elegance in his style, and no taste in his composition. We are therefore

led a writer some years afterwards, who knew of his participation in that work, to attribute them to Dr. Johnson. "Mr. Nichols," says Mr. Murphy, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, "showed him in 1780 a book called 'Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton,' in which the affair of Lawder was renewed with virulence ; and a poetical scale in the Literary Magazine 1758, (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection) was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin— ' In the business of Lawder I was deceived ; partly by thinking the man too frantic to be fraudulent. Of the *poetical scale* quoted from the Magazine I am not the author. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work ; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it.' " \*

As a matter of literary curiosity it may not be uninteresting to state the reasons why this paper is attributed to Goldsmith, although no certain evidence of the matter is known to exist or is likely now to be obtained.

These are, the use of a scale in reference to the merits of authors on another occasion, as

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to consider him in one fixed point of light,—that of a great poet, with a laudable envy of rivalling and excelling all who attempted sublimity of sentiment and description."—*Literary Mag.* Jan. 1758.

\* " Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson," p. 50 : prefixed to his Works, 12 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1806.

in the preface to the *Citizen of the World*; similarity of opinion on the merits of our poets with those expressed in his avowed writings; the high standard of poetry assumed in both: the same opinion, incidentally introduced, of the merits of the disputants in the contest between Bentley and Boyle; the same account here as in his edition of Parnell of the origin of two of that poet's pieces; similar political opinions with Dr. Johnson, thence influencing his supposed opinion of Milton; the same preference here of Farquhar over Congreve, Vanburgh, and others, as always maintained by him in conversation and in writing. To these may be added the common evidence of style; the use as in all his essays, of the first person; the fact of his being then unacquainted with Johnson, who as having had connection with the Magazine, though not then engaged in it, might have known the writer, through the proprietor; the probability of its being his first introduction to Newbery, by whom he was afterwards so much employed; the general recollection of Mrs. Lawder that he had early drawn up some such essay; and the belief that he contributed more than one paper to this Magazine. Thus in February 1758, commences a paper, with traces of his manner, though not decisive in their nature, on the English Language, which are continued till May; from the latter is taken the article on the "Augustan Age in England," printed in the *Bee*; and in the same month is another paper of his, also

printed in the *Bee*, "On the Pride and Luxury of the Middling Class of People." The *Poetical Scale* and the *Sequel* were afterwards republished in the *Ladies' Magazine*, when he was connected with it.

His residence being at this time in the vicinity of Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, the Temple Exchange Coffee House, near Temple Bar, became a place of frequent resort. Like Johnson, he was fond of a coffee house and a club; for to men without domestic ties, these are substitutes for society. But this house likewise formed a kind of professional place of call, the custom not having then passed away of physicians resorting to particular coffee houses, where at certain hours of the day they were to be sought and found, rather than at their own residences, when required to visit patients. Here the news of the day, of the profession, and of literature, but more particularly the business of the theatre, which then occupied in public opinion the place now given to the House of Commons, were freely discussed; the behaviour of the manager, the ability of actors, and the merits of new pieces, decided upon with something like an authority from which there was no appeal; for physicians and lawyers (the unemployed part no doubt), with the idlers of every description to be found in a great metropolis, formed at this time the most authoritative body of critics. Here likewise, when unwilling to make known very humble lodgings, he in common with others

wrote letters and received them,—one of the common resources of genteel poverty ; here he relaxed from the drudgery of writing into social intercourse, found others as willing to enjoy the passing moment as himself, and formed or renewed intimacies with his literary brethren.

Among these was Dr. James Grainger, likewise a physician, reviewer, and poet, who having graduated in Edinburgh in 1753, was probably known to him before. He was born about 1721 (not 1728, as commonly stated) of, as he says himself in a letter still in existence, seen by the present writer, “ a gentleman’s family in Cumberland.” Hitherto he has been deemed a native of Scotland, (it may have been so, though of a Cumbrian family) and the place of his birth stated to be Dunse ; but a strict search made several years ago by Dr. Anderson, after his first edition of the *British Poets*, failed in discovering any trace of the name or family in that quarter. After being initiated into medicine in the Scottish metropolis, he served in a medical capacity in Pulteney’s regiment of foot in Holland in 1746–7–8 ; made a tour of Europe after quitting the army ; and on becoming graduate in physic, established himself in Bond Court, Walbrook. Imbued with a taste for literature, his pen found employment in adding to the income derived from professional labours. In 1755 appeared his *Ode on Solitude*, in Dodsley’s *Collection*, possessing merit enough to obtain from Dr. Johnson,



whose friendship he had the good fortune to acquire\*, the term "noble."

In May 1756, he commenced writer in the Monthly Review in a criticism on Mason's Odes ; and during this and the two following years contributed a variety of articles, chiefly on poetry and the drama†, to that journal, relinquishing his con-

\* Boswell alludes to this intimacy in various parts of his work ; and the following extracts from Grainger's letters to the Rev. Mr. Percy, now in the possession of W. Shaw Mason, Esq., gives a few further particulars :—

" March 30. 1757. Mr. Johnson asked for you very kindly Sunday last, as did Miss Williams."—May 30. 1758, in allusion to a translation of Ovid's Heroic Epistles, which Mr. Percy had in part completed, Grainger writes, " Johnson thinks you may get fifty pieces for your work. I shall soon show it to Millar, and let you know his answer."—June 27. 1758, we have the following amusing notice of Johnson's habitual indolence :—" I have several times called on Johnson to pay him part of your subscription (*for his edition of Shakspeare*). I say part, because he never thinks of working if he has a couple of guineas in his pocket ; but if you notwithstanding order me, the whole shall be given him at once."—July 20. 1758. " Johnson thinks that some of the Epistles (Ovid's, already alluded to) should be done in the heroic measure, and so do I. As to his Shakspeare, *movet sed non promovet*. I shall feed him occasionally with guineas."—Jan. 22. 1764, alluding to his poem of the Sugar Cane, " Sam Johnson has got the second book, but whether he has yet perused it I know not ; perhaps it may lie in his desk untouched till I call for it."—April 6. 1764, adverting to the same work, when the first book had been printed off, " Sam Johnson says he will review it in the Critical (Review). He talks handsomely of you."—August, 1765 : " I am perfectly satisfied with the reception the ' Sugar Cane' has met with, and am greatly obliged to you and Mr. Johnson for the generous care you took of it in my absence."

† They are marked at first by Griffiths " Dr. G." His chief

nexion with it about May 1758. Not wholly neglectful of physic, in 1757 appeared *Historia Febris Intermittentis annorum 1746-7-8, accedunt monita Syphilica*. In March 1758, he became a member of the London College of Physicians ; and in November following published a translation of Tibullus, which meeting with an indifferent reception from the Critical Review, was said by Grainger to proceed from the personal pique of Smollett though known to each other, and interchanging civilities. He replied, although said to be

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Reviews are, besides the first (1756), on "The Converts, an Ode ;" " Writings and Genius of Pope ;" " Smart's Ode ;" " Fakeer ;" " Beauty, an Ode ;" Six articles in the Monthly Catalogue of the first Half-yearly Appendix ; " Telemachus ;" " Philippic Poems ;" " Leucothoe ;" " Philosophical Transactions" (September and October), in conjunction with another writer, B., who is not known ; " Cupid ;" " The Cadet ;" " Ode to Love ;" " Idea of Beauty ;" " Tour in France," 1757 ; " De Choisel's Method of treating Persons bitten by Mad Animals ;" " Woodward's Cases in Physic ;" " Foreign Books" (February) ; " Foreign Books" (March) ; " Loss of the Handkerchief," Heroic-Comic Poem ; " Collection Académique ;" " Sayer's Translation into Latin of Pope's Universal Prayer ;" " Newcomb's Versification of Harvey's Contemplations ;" " Fleece, a Poem," by Dyer ; " Oriental Eclogues ;" " Medical Observations and Inquiries ;" " Goldoni's Two Italian Comedies ;" " Lind on the Means of preserving the Health of Seamen ;" " Newcomb's Versification of Harvey's Contemplation on a Flower Garden," 1758 ; " Duncomb's Translation of Horace ;" " Massey's Translation of Ovid's Fasti ;" " Cidyllia, or Miscellaneous Poems ;" " Holkham, a Poem ;" " Verses to the People of England, by W. Whitehead ;" " Ode to the King of Prussia ;" " Fancy, an irregular Ode ;" " Elegy on a Drum Head ;" besides a great number of short notices in the Monthly Catalogue.

a worthy man in the strain of an enraged and irritable author ; this produced a severe rejoinder in the Review for February 1759 ; and on the part of both there was more of personality and vituperation than was becoming, or the occasion demanded.

In the previous autumn he had engaged to travel for four years with a young friend, a Mr. Bourryan, of large West India property, whose studies from an early period had been in part committed to his charge. The reward for this appropriation of time, was to be an annuity for life of 200*l.* per annum. The resolution to quit London, he writes to Dr. Percy in letters from which this abstract was taken was not adopted in a hurry ; for though “ his practice was not exceeded by that of any young physician in London,” the proposed term of absence he believed, would not interfere materially with his views, while it promised to add to the number and respectability of his friends. In April 1759, he embarked for the island of St. Christopher in the West Indies ; quarrelled soon after reaching it, as is said, with his patron ; commenced practising physician ; and married a lady of good family but small fortune, some of whose friends fancied the union not to her advantage. A grossly defamatory and untrue account of the lady appeared during her life, in a memoir of her husband, inserted in the Westminster Magazine, for 1773, which the exertions of Mr. Percy and others, who knew her and her friends, caused to be contradicted by the threat of

legal proceedings. Her affection for his memory was apparently strong ; and his letters already mentioned speak of her in terms of similar regard. In the autumn of 1763, he returned to England. The poem of the Sugar Cane, written during his abode in the West Indies, had been previously transmitted home, and after some uncertainty as to the mode of publication, did not appear until after he had sailed in May 1764, on his return to St. Christopher's. There, it appears, his affairs had become involved during his absence, which an inheritance derived from the death of a brother in Scotland, enabled him soon after to obviate in part. Unsettled in his plans at this period, as the letters alluded to evince ; speculating on the advantages to be derived from removing to other islands less populous and more open to the enterprise of new settlers ; anticipating wealth as well from planting as his profession ; and the enjoyment, as he says, of many happy days in England when that good should be acquired,—projects conceived with all the warmth of poetry, and overthrown with the usual speed and sternness of matter of fact,—he was taken ill, and died on the 16th December 1766, in the forty-sixth year of his age.

Grainger possessed considerable learning and genius : his temper, according to Dr. Percy with whom a close friendship had been formed, generous ; his habits social ; his disposition benevolent, and as Dr. Johnson said, “ who would do any good in his power ;” his manners simple and un-

obtrusive in general society, and therefore sometimes overlooked for more loud and commonplace though less gifted and informed talkers. He looked earnestly to the acquisition of fame as a poet ; more so than the merits of his pieces warranted ; and wishing to rise to literary eminence by this alone, believed he had in some measure secured it, for on first proceeding to the West Indies, he expressed to Mr. Percy the intention of leaving with him, in case of his own death, a corrected copy of his works for publication, with a request that not a line should be permitted to appear which might be thought to derogate from his reputation. His poems however have not had all the success he expected. Attempts to introduce them to public favour made by some admirers in Scotland have failed\*, either from being deficient in true poetical power, or from the subject of the principal piece—the Sugar Cane—possessing little interest for general readers ; and so slightly was poetry valued on the spot where the theme was sufficiently familiar, that though advertised for a charitable purpose, no more, as he admits, than twelve subscribers could be obtained in the

\* An edition of his poems, with a new life prefixed, was undertaken and printed by Dr. Anderson, Editor of the *British Poets*, chiefly at the suggestion of Bishop Percy, by whom many new pieces were supplied ; but the work has not been published. A long correspondence on this subject has been examined by the writer.

West India islands. With its fate in England he was better satisfied, as appears by the extract already given from his letters. It is now seldom read, or—no imperfect test of merit—quoted. Neither has the Ode on Solitude retained firm hold on the public mind.\* The neglect is said by some of his countrymen—if indeed he be really a Scotsman—to be unjust; but to what other tribunal than the mass of readers shall we appeal? The version of Tibullus, though not without spirit and tenderness in parts, is deficient as a whole in that felicitous execution which stamps the genuine poet of a higher order.

It was through Grainger that the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Percy with Goldsmith commenced in the year 1758. The latter alludes to his former friend in the description of fishes in *Animated Nature*, when speaking of such as are poisonous.†

\* A critic of the present day will find fault with the rhyme even of the first lines—

“ O Solitude, romantic maid !

Whether by nodding towers you tread.”

† “ The fact of their (certain descriptions of fish) being poisonous when eaten is equally notorious ; and the cause equally inscrutable. My poor worthy friend Dr. Grainger, who resided for many years at St. Christopher’s, assured me, that of the fish caught of the same kind at one end of the island, some were the best and most wholesome in the world ; while others, taken at a different end, were always dangerous and most commonly fatal.”



## CHAP. VII.

VISIT OF HIS BROTHER TO LONDON.—LETTER TO MR. HODSON.  
—MEMOIRS OF A PROTESTANT.—GRAND MAGAZINE —LET-  
TERS TO MR. MILLS, TO MR. BRYANTON, AND TO MRS. JANE  
LAWDER.—APPOINTMENT TO INDIA.—LETTER TO MR. HOD-  
SON.—ATTEMPTS TO PASS SURGEONS' HALL.

HAVING inadvertently mentioned in a letter to Mrs. Lawder, in Ireland, his acquaintance with several names eminent in literature, he was surprised shortly after by the arrival thence of his brother Charles. No previous intimation of the design preceded this visit,—the object of which was, with the characteristic simplicity of a country youth, to be provided for by some of his brother's influential friends; for although at the age of twenty-one, he possessed neither provision, nor profession to enable him to obtain it.

The error as to his brother's power of serving him was soon apparent. However eminent might be his friends, the honour of their acquaintance by no means implied the freedom of drawing upon their purses or their patronage, had they such to bestow; while Oliver, pressed by the difficulty of providing for his own wants, found no little embarrassment in the demands of another. When Charles expressed disappointment, as he told Mr. Bindley

many years afterwards, at not finding his brother in better circumstances, the latter gaily replied, "All in good time, my dear boy; I shall be richer by-and-by. Besides you see, I am not in positive want. Addison, let me tell you, wrote his poem of the Campaign in a garret in the Haymarket, three stories high; and you see I am not come to that yet, for I have only got to the *second* story."

The stay in London of Charles was not therefore protracted; and as he came without previous communication with his brother, quitted it in nearly a similar manner. Tinctured with an equal spirit of adventure, dispirited by ill success, loth to return to Ireland no better than he quitted it, and determined to try his fortune in some way, he is said to have embarked in a humble capacity for Jamaica. Here, and in others of the islands, he continued, by his own account, for above thirty years without communicating with his family, who consequently believed him dead. Thus Oliver writes to his brother Maurice in January, 1770:—"You talked of being my only brother; I don't understand you—where is Charles." There is reason, however, to believe that he visited Ireland previous to the voyage, otherwise it would seem incredible how the Poet could be so long unacquainted with his destination or supposed death. He did not revisit England till 1791, some of the particulars of which bear an air of romance; they belong, however, to a future page.

The presence of Charles in London, and the nature of his own pursuits there, are alluded to in the following letter of Oliver to his brother-in-law, which breathes great affection for his friends, a strong attachment to the scenes of his youth and with some sharp strictures on his country, no inconsiderable regard for it. It was written soon after quitting the Review. In the opening passage there is some obscurity. He talks of four years having elapsed since his last letters went to Ireland; this can apply only to such as were addressed to Mr. Hodson, which was correct; but he had written from the Continent to his brother Henry, to Mr. Contarine, to Mrs. Lawder, and, it is believed, to Mr. Mills of Roscommon.

*“To Daniel Hodson, Esq., at Lishoy, near  
Ballymahon, Ireland.*

“DEAR SIR,

“It may be four years since my last letters went to Ireland,—to you in particular. I received no answer; probably because you never wrote to me. My brother Charles, however, informs me of the fatigue you were at in soliciting a subscription to assist me, not only among my friends and relatives, but acquaintance in general. Though my pride might feel some repugnance at being thus relieved, yet my gratitude can suffer no diminution. How much am I obliged to you, to them,

for such generosity, or, (why should not your virtues have their proper name?) for such charity to me at that juncture. Sure I am born to ill fortune, to be so much a debtor and unable to repay. But to say no more of this: too many professions of gratitude are often considered as indirect petitions for future favours. Let me only add, that my not receiving that supply was the cause of my present establishment at London. You may easily imagine what difficulties I had to encounter, left as I was without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence; and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many in such circumstances would have had recourse to the friar's cord, or the suicide's halter. But with all my follies I had principle to resist the one, and resolution to combat the other.

“I suppose you desire to know my present situation. As there is nothing in it at which I should blush, or which mankind could censure, I see no reason for making it a secret. In short, by a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live. Nothing is more apt to introduce us to the gates of the muses than poverty; but it were well if they only left us at the door. The mischief is, they sometimes choose to give us their company at the entertainment; and want, instead of being gentleman-usher, often turns master of the ceremonies.

“Thus, upon learning I write, no doubt you imagine I starve; and the name of an author naturally reminds you of a garret. In this particular I do not think proper to undeceive my friends. But whether I eat or starve, live in a first floor or four pair of stairs high, I still remember them with ardour; nay, my very country comes in for a share of my affection. Unaccountable fondness for country, this *maladie du pïis*, as the French call it! Unaccountable that he should still have an affection for a place who never, when in it, received above common civility; who never brought any thing out of it except his brogue and his blunders. Surely my affection is equally ridiculous with the Scotchman’s, who refused to be cured of the itch, because it made him unco’ thoughtful of his wife and bonny Inverary.

“But now to be serious,—let me ask myself what gives me a wish to see Ireland again? The country is a fine one, perhaps? no. There are good company in Ireland? no. The conversation there is generally made up of a smutty toast or a bawdy song; the vivacity supported by some humble cousin, who has just folly enough to earn his dinner. Then perhaps there’s more wit and learning among the Irish? Oh, lord, no! There has been more money spent in the encouragement of the Padareen mare there one season, than given in rewards to learned men since the times of Usher. All their productions in learning amount to perhaps a translation, or a few tracts in divinity;

and all their productions in wit to just nothing at all.\* Why the plague, then, so fond of Ireland? Then, all at once, because you, my dear friend, and a few more who are exceptions to the general picture, have a residence there. This it is that gives me all the pangs I feel in separation. I confess I carry this spirit sometimes to the souring the pleasures I at present possess. If I go to the opera where Signora Columba pours out all the mazes of melody, I sit and sigh for Lishoy fireside, and Johnny Armstrong's 'Last Good

\* We must not be displeased with Goldsmith for a sketch so remarkably corroborated by that of another of our able and intelligent countrymen, Lord Orrery. The coincidence is curious being written not long before, though not published till long afterwards, and could only arise from the representation being correct. It is useless to complain of this, irritable and sensitive as the national temperament is to reproof: the knowledge of our faults is a necessary step towards their correction; and it should never be forgotten, that where letters are not cultivated with something like warmth by the gentry, the lower orders must be proportionably low in the scale of intelligence, to which, no doubt, many of their excesses and irregularities in Ireland, are owing. Lord Orrery writes, May 1747, from his seat at Caledon:—

“I have lately passed a fortnight in Dublin. All my leisure time was employed in the booksellers' shops, and particularly in search of such books as you have mentioned to me. Many of them are not to be found on our Hibernian coast. When St. Patrick banished poisonous animals, the saint in his fury probably cursed books into the bargain. He certainly wished ignorance might succeed him; and I am sorry to tell you that scarce a gentleman in Ireland (although he be a better Protestant than ever St. Patrick dreaded) goes further in literature than *Urban's English Magazine*, or *Faulkner's Irish Journal*.”



Night,' from Peggy Golden. If I climb Hampstead-hill, than where nature never exhibited a more magnificent prospect, I confess it fine ; but then I had rather be placed on the little mount before Lishoy gate, and there take in—to me—the most pleasing horizon in nature.

“ Before Charles came hither, my thoughts sometimes found refuge from severer studies among my friends in Ireland. I fancied strange revolutions at home ; but I find it was the rapidity of my own motion that gave an imaginary one to objects really at rest. No alterations there. Some friends, he tells me, are still lean, but very rich ; others very fat, but still very poor. Nay, all the news I hear of you is, that you sally out in visits among the neighbours, and sometimes make a migration from the blue bed to the brown. I could from my heart wish that you and she (Mrs. Hodson), and Lishoy and Ballymahon, and all of you, would fairly make a migration into Middlesex ; though, upon second thoughts, this might be attended with a few inconveniences. Therefore, as the mountain will not come to Mahomet, why Mahomet shall go to the mountain ; or, to speak plain English, as you cannot conveniently pay me a visit, if next summer I can contrive to be absent six weeks from London, I shall spend three of them among my friends in Ireland. But first, believe me, my design is purely to visit, and neither to cut a figure nor levy contributions,—neither to excite envy nor solicit favour ; in fact, my circumstances are adapted to neither

I am too poor to be gazed at, and too rich to need assistance.

“ You see, dear Dan, how long I have been talking about myself ; but attribute my vanity to my affection : as every man is fond of himself, and I consider you as a second self, I imagine you will consequently be pleased with these instances of egotism.       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

My dear Sir, these things give me real uneasiness, and I could wish to redress them. But at present there is hardly a kingdom in Europe in which I am not a debtor. I have already discharged my most threatening and pressing demands, for we must be just before we can be grateful. For the rest, I need not say (you know I am)

“ Your affectionate kinsman,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ Temple Exchange Coffee-house,  
near Temple Bar,  
(where you may direct an answer),  
December 27, 1757.”

At this period he was occupied on a translation of some length from the French, bearing the following very ample and descriptive title-page ; it came out toward the end of February, 1758 :—

“ The Memoirs of a Protestant, condemned to the Gallies of France for his Religion. Written by himself. Comprehending an account of the various distresses he suffered in slavery, and his constancy in supporting almost every cruelty that

bigoted zeal could inflict, or human nature sustain; also a description of the galleys, and the service in which they are employed. The whole interspersed with anecdotes relative to the general history of the times for a period of thirteen years, during which the author continued in slavery, till he was at last set free at the intercession of the Court of Great Britain. In two volumes. Translated from the original, just published at the Hague, by James Willington."

Griffiths, who had a proprietary interest in the work, and whose name appears in the titlepage as one of the publishers, acknowledged it to be by Goldsmith; the copyright, however, as Isaac Reed ascertained, was sold by him to C. Dilly, the bookseller in the Poultry, for twenty guineas. Boswell, who was afterwards much connected with the Dillys, alludes probably to this among other pieces of the Poet which he had through that channel the opportunity of tracing, in a letter to Bishop Percy, of March 12, 1790, when the project alluded to seemed advancing to completion. "Pray, how does your edition of Goldsmith go on? I am in the way of getting at many additional works of his, which I shall communicate to your lordship."\*

The original in French, forming an octavo volume of nearly six hundred pages, now rendered

\* MS. correspondence, in the possession of W. R. Mason, Esq.

into English in two duodecimos, was noticed in the Monthly Review of the preceding year ; the version is executed with vigour, owing much no doubt to the taste and skill of the translator, who whatever be his correctness of interpretation, exhibits his usual ease and perspicuity of style. Griffiths, in an article of the Review bearing his own signature, whence we may infer there was then no serious disagreement, speaks of him as “ the ingenious translator, who really deserves this name on account of the spirit of the performance, though we have little to say in praise of his accuracy ;” terms nearly similar to those used in the same journal in characterizing his translations after his death. Why the name of Willington was affixed to the book rather than his own, does not appear ; but it must be remembered that many of our writers at that time were much more shy of committing their names to the public, however well known in private, than at present ; and always impressed, as he appears to have been, with the belief of taking a high station in letters, he was probably unwilling that his name should appear attached to an inferior work, until he had shown ability to do something better. A name, however, being deemed necessary, that of a college acquaintance who is supposed to have been then in London pursuing the same precarious profession of letters, was used with his consent.\*

\* “ 1747, Decembris 2<sup>o</sup>.—*Jacobus Willington Pens :—Filius Johannis generosi—Annum agens 16—Natus in comitatu de*

The tale which it narrates is sufficiently distressful: all the tyranny that barbarous bigotry could inflict seems to have been used by the agents of Louis XIV. on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; and from what we know from other quarters, there is no reason to believe the details given here exaggerated. Fortunately, Christianity itself is not necessarily answerable for the atrocities of its professors. Catholicism, in her scorching zeal for exclusive tenets, has incurred debts to humanity which she never can repay; but one of the modes by which these are in part requited is the condemnation passed upon her misdeeds by even the more enlightened of her own creed, and the terror inspired by the least prospect of her recovery of power in all who profess another.

The preface to this work, like so many of his fugitive pieces, has been hitherto inedited; it is written with care, has all his manner, is rarely to be met with, and therefore will find place in the present edition of his works.

“Perhaps,” he says, in allusion to the prevailing passion for novel reading, and the truth of the narrative, “what he thinks its excellences may be considered as defects,—what he hopes may give it popularity will contribute to assign to it neglect. Thus, for instance, it cannot be recommended as a grateful entertainment to the numerous readers of

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*Tipperary—Educatus sub ferula Ma : Grubese—Tutor D. Whittingham.” (Register of Trinity College, Dublin.)*

reigning romance, as it is strictly true. No events are here to astonish ; no unexpected incidents to surprise ; no such high-finished pictures as captivate the imagination, and have made fiction fashionable. Our reader must be content with the simple exhibition of truth, and consequently, of nature ; he must be satisfied to see Vice triumphant, and Virtue in distress ; to see men punished or rewarded, not as his wishes, but as Providence has thought proper to direct : for all here wears the face of sincerity."

Diligent search in the periodical works of this year for such occasional pieces as may have come from his pen, has not been attended with material success. That he was not idle we are assured, although not possessed of sufficient paternal partiality to own or reclaim his offspring : and seems rather as will be seen in one of his letters, to be amused at the perplexity to which this omission may give rise among future biographers. But there is one journal which, from being established at this period, published by Griffiths, and aided by the papers of three of his acquaintance, may likewise have been assisted by his contributions.

This was "The Grand Magazine of Universal Intelligence and Monthly Chronicle of our Own Times," projected toward the end of 1757 by a few printers and booksellers, and commenced the first month of the following year. Who the editor was, does not appear. Griffiths signs the dedication, which, like various similar publications of this



period, is to the popular idol Mr. Pitt. Owen Ruffhead, although writing at the same period largely in the Review, took a considerable share in the prose department\* ; Grainger and Percy, as will appear by the subjoined passages from the correspondence of the former†, furnished pieces of

\* In the fly-leaf of Isaac Reed's copy of this Magazine is the following memorandum :—"The dissertation on the Constitution of England, and most of the political original Essays in these Magazines, were the productions of Owen Ruffhead, Esq., as his friend Mr. Fountain informed me this 25th March, 1775.—J. REED."

† To the Rev. Mr. Percy Grainger writes, toward the end of 1757,—"Mr. Strahan (a particular friend of mine), and some others, are at present upon an extensive plan of a monthly chronicle ; and as they have often heard me praise your poetical talents, they desire me to engage you to furnish them with poetry. They are determined to publish nothing in that way but what is good ; and therefore they are very urgent with me for your Scotch song. Shall I let them have it ? It can do you no harm ; or rather it will do you honour, when its author is named. I shall now and then send them a little supply ; and if you will also, at your leisure, let them have some fresh wholesome country fare, they will not be niggardly to us in their acknowledgments."—Again, he communicates to the same friend in February, 1758, "The Latin poem you sent me

‘ Is all with Venus’s cestus bound.’

Pray who is the author of it ? Am I to congratulate you on this happy effort of genius ? It goes in the Grand (Magazine) this month, where you will again find your friend (Grainger himself) making fine speeches to a Water Nymph, and hymning the praises of Cheerfulness. The proprietors are determined to admit nothing but what is new and seems to be beautiful. Do let us have something of yours for next month. You and I, methinks, may supply them with poetry for one half-year at least."—In April of the same year he says, "Have you seen

poetry, and possibly of prose. No positive testimony has been traced of Goldsmith being engaged in this work ; although the coincidences noticed, and the tenor and style of some of the papers, render it probable. Nothing in consequence is derived from this source for his works. The papers which bear the strongest resemblance to his manner and some of his sentiments, and not being *political* did not probably come from Ruffhead, are the Preface to the first volume,—On the Character of the Present Age,—On Happiness,—The Necessity of a Learned Education for Men of Fortune,—On the Complexion of the Times,—On the Abuse of Words,—On Asylums and Reformatories,—On the Unequal Temper of the English,—On the Station of Kings,—Distinction between Pride and Vanity. It may favour the idea of his being con-

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the March Magazine? The two Sonnets are there inserted, as the 'Hint to Poets' will be in the next month. The Elegy and Dialogue are mine."

From this correspondence it appears that Grainger contributed to the Magazine three Elegies in the January Number ; —Hymn to Cheerfulness,—To the Nymph of P \* \* \* (Pitkelly) Waters, in February ; Elegy and Dialogue in that of March ; and Ode to Contentment in that of June. About the same period he translated Leander to Hero and Hero to Leander, for Mr. Percy's version of Ovid's Epistles. Percy's contributions positively known are, the Latin Poem in the February Magazine, beginning

'Exffinit quondam blandum meditata laborem,'

and two Sonnets signed G. in that of April. The Scotch Song alluded to was probably the celebrated one, "O Nanny, wilt thou gang with me?" It did not, however, appear in the Magazine.

nected with this magazine, that two long extracts from "Memoirs of a Protestant," evidently with the view of attracting more than usual public attention to the translation, are given in the March and April numbers.

It may have been about the period of this publication coming out, or immediately previous, that finding more certain and permanent provision for the wants of life necessary, he was induced to resume the superintendence of Dr. Milner's school, on the promise of that gentleman to use his interest in procuring him a medical appointment in India. The precise time of his return to Peckham, if indeed we are to believe Miss Milner's account of his protracted or occasional residence there correct, is uncertain; nor was his stay long. About the middle of the summer we find him again dependent on his literary labours in London. He had yet acquired no name, and felt that a work of some research or permanent interest, if literature should continue to constitute his chief pursuit, was necessary to secure the station at which he aimed, and to render even his fugitive pieces more productive in the literary market. In such intervals as were not devoted to the supply of immediate demands, he at this time projected and partly executed a work for which his journey on the Continent and acquaintance with its authors, acquired in part during his career as reviewer, furnished a portion of materials,—*"An Enquiry into the present State of Polite Learning in Europe."* He worked upon

it with diligence ; brought to the subject all the information he possessed ; and with the view of disappointing the cupidity of the Dublin booksellers, who by reprinting works of merit published in London, deprived authors of the fair reward of their labours accruing from the sale in Ireland, he wrote to his friends there, soliciting their aid in procuring subscriptions, for which the requisite number of volumes should be transmitted thither.

One of his letters on this occasion, addressed to his relative and former College companion, Mr. Mills, of Roscommon, affords a finished specimen of mingled delicacy of solicitation, and skill in composition. Trifling as was the favour asked, it appears by a subsequent letter, neither to have been granted, nor his application even answered ; this may explain why little, if indeed any, communication took place with that gentleman afterwards ; who, however, could admire and venerate when raised to fame, him whom unknown and in poverty he had declined to aid.

*“ To Edward Mills, Esq., near Roscommon,  
Ireland.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ You have quitted, I find, that plan of life which you once intended to pursue\*, and given up ambition for domestic tranquillity. Were I to consult your satisfaction alone in this change,

\* He had been intended for the Bar.

I have the utmost reason to congratulate your choice; but when I consider my own, I cannot avoid feeling some regret that one of my few friends has declined a pursuit in which he had every reason to expect success. The truth is, like the rest of the world, I am self-interested in my concern; and do not so much consider the happiness you have acquired, as the honour I have probably lost in the change. I have often let my fancy loose when you were the subject, and have imagined you gracing the bench, or thundering at the bar; while I have taken no small pride to myself, and whispered all that I could come near that this was my cousin. Instead of this, it seems you are merely contented to be a happy man,—to be esteemed only by your acquaintance,—to cultivate your paternal acres,—to take unmolested a nap under one of your own hawthorns, or in Mrs. Mills's bedchamber, which even a poet must confess is rather the more comfortable place of the two.

“But however your resolutions may be altered with respect to your situation in life, I persuade myself they are unalterable with regard to your friends in it. I cannot think the world has taken such entire possession of that heart (once so susceptible of friendship), as not to have left a corner there for a friend or two; but I flatter myself that even I have my place among the number. This I have a claim to from the similitude of our dispositions; or, setting that aside, I can demand it

as a right by the most equitable law in nature—I mean that of retaliation; for, indeed, you have more than your share in mine.

“I am a man of few professions; and yet this very instant I cannot avoid the painful apprehension that my present professions (which speak not half my feelings) should be considered only as a pretext to cover a request, as I have a request to make. No, my dear Ned, I know you are too generous to think so; and you know me (to be) too proud to stoop to unnecessary insincerity. I have a request, it is true, to make; but as I know to whom I am a petitioner, I make it without diffidence or confusion. It is in short this: I am going to publish a book in London, entitled ‘An Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe.’ Every work published here the printers in Ireland republish there without giving the author the least consideration for his copy. I would in this respect disappoint their avarice, and have all the additional advantages that may result from the sale of my performance there to myself.

“The book is now printing in London; and I have requested Dr. Radcliff, Mr. Lawder, Mr. Bryanton, my brother Mr. Henry Goldsmith, and brother-in-law Mr. Hodson, to circulate my proposals among their acquaintance. The same request I now make to you, and have accordingly given directions to Mr. Bradley, bookseller, in Dame Street, Dublin, to send you a hundred proposals. Whatever subscriptions pursuant to those



proposals, you may receive, when collected may be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the money, and be accountable for the books, I shall not by a paltry apology, excuse myself for putting you to this trouble. Were I not convinced that you found more pleasure in doing good-natured things than uneasiness in being employed in them, I should not have singled you out on this occasion. It is probable you would comply with such a request if it tended to the encouragement of any man of learning whatsoever ; what then, may not he expect who has claims of family and friendship to enforce his ?

“ I am, dear, Sir,

“ Your sincere Friend and humble Servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“ London, Temple Exchange Coffee-house,  
August 7, 1758.”\*

We have another letter in a very different strain, written the succeeding week to his friend Bryanton, whom he had formerly addressed from Edinburgh. It is an effort of gaiety to throw off a weight that presses too heavily on his situation and prospects to be easily displaced. We are amused by his humour, yet cannot but feel for a

\* Bishop Percy dates this letter in 1759, but slight consideration or inquiry would have detected the error. The work mentioned in it came out in April of that year ; and consequently, as there was no second edition then, could not be printing in August.

man of genius in the condition to which he shortly indeed, but forcibly, confesses himself reduced,—“in a garret writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score.” His spirits, however, seem never to have been long depressed: a constitutional, perhaps national, buoyancy of spirits or humour, raised him above the gloom that at times threatened to prove overwhelming; and a consciousness never wholly extinguished, of the possession of powers that would one day enable him to emerge from obscurity, inspired hope in the most unpromising situations.

Of this nature are a few of the following playful anticipations of future fame, jocularly thrown out indeed, but not less certainly entertained. Nor is the sally relative to the difficulties of future biographers and commentators in tracing his earlier writings, less amusing than it was prophetic: the fact, sometimes vexatiously enough, as must be confessed, has been literally verified.

To the Rev. Dr. Handcock of Dublin, the writer and the public are indebted for this interesting letter, transcribed from the original in his possession, addressed to his father-in-law. It is necessary to state, that portions of the paper being worn away by time, a few sentences now imperfect, are attempted to be supplied from the context, and it is hoped, with a near approach to accuracy. The passages thus introduced are inclosed within brackets.

*“ To Robert Bryanton, Esq., at Ballymahon,  
Ireland.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have heard it remark'd\*, I believe by yourself, that they who are drunk, or out of their wits, fancy every body else in the same condition : mine is a friendship that neither distance nor time can efface, which is probably the reason that, for the soul of me, I can't avoid thinking yours of the same complexion ; and yet I have many reasons for being of a contrary opinion, else why in so long an absence was I never made a partner in your concerns ? To hear of your successes would have given me the utmost pleasure ; and a communication of your very disappointments would divide the uneasiness I too frequently feel for my own. Indeed, my dear Bob, you don't conceive how unkindly you have treated one whose circumstances afford him few prospects of pleasure, except those reflected from the happiness of his friends. However, since you have not let me hear from you, I have in some measure disappointed your neglect by frequently thinking of you. Every day do I remember the calm anecdotes of your life, from the fire-side to the easy chair ; recal the various adventures that first cemented our friendship,—the school, the college,

\* A few of the contractions of the original are retained. Several of his earlier printed pieces and most of his letters, exhibit similar contractions.

or the tavern; preside in fancy over your cards; am displeased at your bad play when the rubber goes against you, though not with all that agony of soul as when I once was your partner.

“Is it not strange that two of such like affections should be so much separated and so differently employed as we are? You seem placed at the centre of fortune’s wheel, and let it revolve never so fast, seem insensible of the motion. I seem to have been tied to the circumference, and [turned] disagreeably round like an wh—— in a whirligig. [I sate] down with an intention to chide, and yet methinks [I have forgot] my resentment already. The truth is, I am a [simpleton with] regard to you: I may attempt to bluster, [but like] Anacreon, my heart is respondent only to softer affections. And yet, now I think on’t again, I will be angry. God’s curse, Sir! who am I? Eh! what am I? Do you know whom you have offended? A man whose character may one of these days be mentioned with profound respect in a German comment or Dutch dictionary; whose name you will probably hear ushered in by a Doctissimus Doctissimorum, or heel-pieced with a long Latin termination. Think how Goldsmithius, or Gubblegurchius, or some such sound, as rough as a nutmeg-grater, will become me. Think of that!—God’s curse, Sir! who am I? I must own my ill-natured cotemporaries have not hitherto paid me those honours I have had such just reason to expect. I have not yet

seen my face reflected in all the lively display of red and white paints on any sign-posts in the suburbs. Your handkerchief weavers seem as yet unacquainted with my merits or physiognomy, and the very snuff-box makers appear to have forgot their respect. Tell them all from me, they are a set of Gothic, barbarous, ignorant scoundrels. There will come a day, no doubt it will—I beg you may live a couple of hundred years longer, only to see the day—when the Scaligers and Daciers will vindicate my character, give learned editions of my labours, and bless the times with copious comments on the text. You shall see how they will fish up the heavy scoundrels who disregard me now, or will then offer to cavil at my productions. How will they bewail the times that suffered so much genius to lie neglected! If ever my works find their way to Tartary or China, I know the consequence. Suppose one of your Chinese Owanowitzers instructing one of your Tartarian Chianobacchi—you see I use Chinese names to show my own erudition, as I shall soon make our Chinese talk like an Englishman to show his. This may be the subject of the lecture:—

““ Oliver Goldsmith flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He lived to be an hundred and three years old, [and in that] age may justly be styled the sun of [literature] and the Confucius of Europe. [Many of his earlier writings, to the regret of the] learned world, were anonymous, and have probably been lost, because united

with those of others. The first avowed piece the world has of his is entitled an ‘Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe,’—a work well worth its weight in diamonds. In this he profoundly explains what learning is, and what learning is not. In this he proves that blockheads are not men of wit, and yet that men of wit are actually blockheads.’

“But as I choose neither to tire my Chinese Philosopher, nor you, nor myself, I must discontinue the oration, in order to give you a good pause for admiration; and I find myself most violently disposed to admire too. Let me, then, stop my fancy to take a view of my future self; and, as the boys say, light down to see myself on horseback.\* Well, now I am down, where the d—l is *I*? Oh, Gods! Gods! here in a garret, writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score! However, dear Bob, whether in penury or affluence, serious or gay, I am ever wholly thine.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“London, Temple Exchange Coffee-house,  
Temple Bar, Aug. 14, 1758.”

“Give my—no, not compliments neither, but something [the] most warm and sincere wish that you can conceive, to your mother, Mrs. Bryanton, to Miss Bryanton, to yourself; and if there be a favourite dog in the family, let me be remembered to it.”

\* A common phrase among schoolboys in Ireland now, in ridiculing an unskilful appearance of their companions on horseback.



The progress of his book, and the desire of procuring subscriptions for it, induced at this time unusual (for him) diligence in writing private letters. To this is owing another dated on the day following the preceding; it is addressed to his cousin Mrs. Lawder, formerly Miss Contarine, and is admirable in its kind, mingling vivacity and humour with serious, if not melancholy retrospections; and while professing a sturdy independence, lest his professions of regard should be misconstrued, avowing past poverty in a sentence that cannot but give pain to every mind of ordinary sensibility:—he would “forget that ever he starved in those streets where Butler and Otway starved before him.” By this also we find what, from his affection and assistance to Oliver in all his imprudences and distresses, we must regret,—that the mind of Mr. Contarine was now reduced to a state of imbecility. This letter, as appears from MS. correspondence of Malone with Bishop Percy,\* was copied by the former at the house of his friend Mr. Metcalf, at Brighton, in 1809, from one in the possession of Mr. Carleton, nephew to the nobleman of that name, given to him by Mr. Mills, who received it from the family of the lady to whom it was written.

“*To Mrs. Jane Lawder.*”

“If you should ask, why in an interval of so many years, you never heard from me, permit me,

\* In Mr. Mason's Collection.

madam, to ask the same question. I have the best excuse in recrimination. I wrote to Kilmore from Leyden in Holland, from Louvain in Flanders, and Rouen in France, but received no answer. To what could I attribute this silence but to displeasure or forgetfulness? Whether I was right in my conjecture I do not pretend to determine; but this I must ingenuously own, that I have a thousand times in my turn endeavoured to forget them, whom I could not but look upon as forgetting me. I have attempted to blot their names from my memory, and, I confess it, spent whole days in efforts to tear their image from my heart. Could I have succeeded, you had not now been troubled with this renewal of a discontinued correspondence; but, as every effort the restless make to procure sleep serves but to keep them waking, all my attempts contributed to impress what I would forget deeper on my imagination. But this subject I would willingly turn from, and yet, ‘for the soul of me,’ I can’t till I have said all.

“ I was, madam, when I discontinued writing to Kilmore, in such circumstances, that all my endeavours to continue your regards might be attributed to wrong motives. My letters might be looked upon as the petitions of a beggar, and not the offerings of a friend; while all my professions, instead of being considered as the result of disinterested esteem, might be ascribed to venal insincerity. I believe, indeed, you had too much generosity to place them in such a light, but I could not bear even the shadow of such a suspicion.

The most delicate friendships are always most sensible of the slightest invasion, and the strongest jealousy is ever attendant on the warmest regard. I could not—I own I could not—continue a correspondence: for every acknowledgment for past favours might be considered as an indirect request for future ones, and where it might be thought I gave my heart from a motive of gratitude alone, when I was conscious of having bestowed it on much more disinterested principles.

“ It is true, this conduct might have been simple enough, but yourself must confess it was in character. Those who know me at all know that I have always been actuated by different principles from the rest of mankind, and while none regarded the interest of his friend more, no man on earth regarded his own less. I have often affected bluntness to avoid the imputation of flattery, have frequently seemed to overlook those merits too obvious to escape notice, and pretended disregard to those instances of good nature and good sense, which I could not fail tacitly to applaud; and all this lest I should be ranked amongst the grinning tribe, who say ‘very true’ to all that is said, who fill a vacant chair at a tea-table, whose narrow souls never moved in a wider circle than the circumference of a guinea, and who had rather be reckoning the money in your pocket than the virtue of your breast. All this, I say, I have done, and a thousand other very silly though very disinterested things in my time, and for all which no soul cares a farthing about me. God’s curse, madam! is it

to be wondered, that he should once in his life forget you, who has been all his life forgetting himself?

“However it is probable you may one of those days see me turned into a perfect hunk, and as dark and intricate as a mouse hole. I have already given my landlady orders for an entire reform in the state of my finances. I declaim against hot suppers, drink less sugar in my tea, and check my grate with brick-bats. Instead of hanging my room with pictures, I intend to adorn it with maxims of frugality. Those will make pretty furniture enough, and won’t be a bit too expensive; for I shall draw them all out with my own hands, and my landlady’s daughter shall frame them with the parings of my black waistcoat. Each maxim is to be inscribed on a sheet of clean paper, and wrote with my best pen; of which the following will serve as a specimen:— ‘Look sharp;’ ‘Mind the main chance;’ ‘Money is money now;’ ‘If you have a thousand pounds you can put your hands by your sides, and say you are worth a thousand pounds every day of the year;’ ‘Take a farthing from a hundred, and it will be a hundred no longer.’ Thus, which way soever I turn my eyes, they are sure to meet one of those friendly monitors; and as we are told of an actor who hung his room round with looking-glass to correct the defects of his person, my apartment shall be furnished in a peculiar manner, to correct the errors of my mind.

“Faith! Madam, I heartily wish to be rich, if it

were only for this reason, to say without a blush how much I esteem you; but alas! I have many a fatigue to encounter before that happy time comes, when your poor old simple friend may again give a loose to the luxuriance of his nature, sitting by Kilmore fire-side, recount the various adventures of a hard-fought life, laugh over the follies of the day, join his flute to your harpsichord, and forget that ever he starved in those streets, where Butler and Otway starved before him.

“And now I mention those great names—My uncle!—he is no more that soul of fire as when once I knew him. Newton and Swift grew dim with age as well as he. But what shall I say?—his mind was too active an inhabitant not to disorder the feeble mansion of its abode; for the richest jewels soonest wear their settings. Yet who but the fool would lament his condition! He now forgets the calamities of life. Perhaps indulgent heaven has given him a foretaste of that tranquillity here, which he so well deserves hereafter.

“But I must come to business; for business, as one of my maxims tells me, must be minded or lost. I am going to publish in London, a book entitled ‘The Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe.’ The booksellers in Ireland republish every performance there without making the author any consideration. I would, in this respect, disappoint their avarice, and have all the profits of my labour to myself. I must therefore request Mr. Lawder to circulate among his friends and acquaintances a hundred of my proposals,

which I have given the bookseller, Mr. Bradley in Dame Street, directions to send to him. If, in pursuance of such circulation, he should receive any subscriptions, I entreat, when collected, they may be sent to Mr. Bradley, as aforesaid, who will give a receipt, and be accountable for the work, or a return of the subscription. If this request (which, if it be complied with, will in some measure be an encouragement to a man of learning,) should be disagreeable or troublesome, I would not press it; for I would be the last man on earth to have my labours go a-begging; but if I know Mr. Lawder, (and sure I ought to know him,) he will accept the employment with pleasure. All I can say—if he writes a book, I will get him two hundred subscribers, and those of the best wits in Europe.

“Whether this request is complied with or not, I shall not be uneasy; but there is one petition I must make to him and to you, which I solicit with the warmest ardour, and in which I cannot bear a refusal. I mean, dear madam, that I may be allowed to subscribe myself,

“Your ever affectionate, and obliged kinsman,  
“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“Now see how I blot and blunder, when I am asking a favour.

“Temple Exchange Coffee-house, Temple Bar,  
August 15, 1758.”



It was not probably till after these letters were written, as there is no allusion to the fact in either, that the professional appointment promised by Dr. Milner was obtained through the influence of Mr. Jones, an East India director. No record of the place to which he was destined, or of the precise time when the nomination took place, can be found, after a careful search in the India House.\* The former, indeed, he states generally as being on the coast of Coromandel; the latter was no doubt September or October, 1758.

His views were now directed to prepare for the voyage, which required a considerable sum for one in his circumstances, destitute alike of money and of friends who could advance it. By the success alone of the book noticed as being in progress, could he hope to raise the necessary means; and even partial failure in that point threatened to mar the whole scheme. With this contingency perhaps in prospect, he wrote the following letter to his brother-in-law. A few passages would induce the belief that, however desirous of visiting certain portions of the East, and securing a certain income, the destination now contemplated was not quite to his satisfaction. He is, indeed, laudably desirous of escaping from uncertainty and penury to

\* A gentleman of the Secretary's office has examined the minutes of the Court of Directors from 1755 to 1764, and another the minutes of the Committee of Shipping from the beginning of 1757 to the end of 1760, without finding the name. The appointment not having been matured, is no doubt the cause of the omission.

a station more commensurate with his deserts, to forsake scenes and associates alien to his choice, and in the true spirit of Horace, *Odi profanum vulgus*, to “separate himself from the vulgar as much in his circumstances as he was in his sentiments.” Yet there is likewise something of disinclination to quit a scene where, as he says, “his fortune is growing kinder,” as well as the “refined conversation in which he is sometimes permitted to partake.” This state of irresolution, shown even in detailing the promised advantages of the expedition, exhibits the honest desire of independence on the one hand, counterbalanced on the other by the hope, however vague and distant, of literary fame. The letter is without date, but written about November, 1758.

“*To Daniel Hodson, Esq., at Lishoy, near Ballymahon, Ireland.*

“DEAR SIR,

“You cannot expect regularity in one who is regular in nothing. Nay, were I forced to love you by rule, I dare venture to say, I could never do it sincerely. Take me then with all my faults. Let me write when I please; for you see I say what I please, and am only thinking aloud when writing to you. I suppose you have heard of my intention of going to the East Indies. The place of my destination is one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel, and I go in quality of physician and surgeon; for which the Company has signed my

warrant, which has already cost me 10*l.* I must also pay 50*l.* for my passage, and 10*l.* for my sea stores ; and the other incidental expenses of my equipment will amount to 60*l.* or 70*l.* more. The salary is but trifling, viz. 100*l.* per annum ; but the other advantages, if a person be prudent, are considerable. The practice of the place, if I am rightly informed, generally amounts to not less than 1000*l.* per annum, for which the appointed physician has an exclusive privilege. This, with the advantages resulting from trade, with the high interest which money bears, viz. 20*l.* per cent., are the inducements which persuade me to undergo the fatigues of sea, the dangers of war, and the still greater dangers of the climate ; which induce me to leave a place where I am every day gaining friends and esteem, and where I might enjoy all the conveniencies of life.

“ I am certainly wrong not to be contented with what I already possess, trifling as it is ; for should I ask myself one serious question—What is it I want ?—what can I answer ? My desires are as capricious as the big-bellied woman’s, who longed for a piece of her husband’s nose. I have no certainty, it is true ; but why cannot I do as some men of more merit, who have lived on more precarious terms ? Scarron used jestingly to call himself the Marquis of Quenault, which was the name of the bookseller who employed him ; and why may not I assert my privilege and quality on the same pretensions ?

“ Yet, upon deliberation, whatever airs I give myself on this side of the water, my dignity, I fancy, would be evaporated before I reached the other. I know you have in Ireland a very indifferent idea of a man who writes for bread, though Swift and Steele did so in the earliest part of their lives. You imagine, I suppose, that every author by profession lives in a garret, wears shabby clothes, and converses with the meanest company. Yet I do not believe there is one single writer who has abilities to translate a French novel that does not keep better company, wear finer clothes, and live more genteelly, than many who pride themselves for nothing else in Ireland. I confess it again, my dear Dan, that nothing but the wildest ambition could prevail on me to leave the enjoyment of the refined conversation which I am sometimes admitted to partake in, for uncertain fortune and paltry show. You cannot conceive how I am sometimes divided ; to leave all that is dear to me gives me pain ; but when I consider I may possibly acquire a genteel independence for life ; when I think of that dignity which philosophy claims, to raise itself above contempt and ridicule ; when I think thus, I eagerly long to embrace every opportunity of separating myself from the vulgar, as much in my circumstances as I am already in my sentiments.

“ I am going to publish a book, for an account of which I refer you to a letter which I wrote to my brother Goldsmith. Circulate for me among your acquaintance a hundred proposals, which I

have given orders may be sent to you; and if in pursuance of such circulation you should receive any subscriptions, let them, when collected, be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the same.

\* \* \* \*

“I know not how my desire of seeing Ireland, which had so long slept, has again revived with so much ardour. So weak is my temper and so unsteady, that I am frequently tempted, particularly when low-spirited, to return home and leave my fortune, though just beginning to look kinder. But it shall not be. In five or six years I expect to indulge these transports. I find I want constitution, and a strong steady disposition, which alone makes men great. I will however correct my faults, since I am conscious of them.”

The allusion to the profits supposed to be derived from translating foreign works of fiction, may lead us to this period as the probable date of one of his undertakings for the booksellers. French novels were then much in vogue; nor were we unwilling to receive from that source an article with which the fertility of our writers now supplies all the rest of Europe. Translations of such works necessarily formed a part of the business of those who pursued literature as a profession; and in this department also, as will be observed by the following receipt transcribed from the original, in his own handwriting, Goldsmith took a share. It is, like so

many others of his letters and memoranda, without date. No account of the work to which it relates can be found in any of the journals of the time; and therefore as the original title mentioned here seems vague and unsatisfactory, another more precise or popular may have been adopted previous to publication.

“Received from Mr. Ralph Griffiths \* the sum of ten pounds ten shillings, for the translation of a book entitled *Memoirs of my Lady B.*, as witness my hand.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”†

Difficulty in providing necessary supplies for the voyage, or the unsteadiness of mind confessed by him as one of his faults, produced soon afterward, as might almost be conjectured from the preceding letter, its necessary results; for his views on India were for a time suspended. Looking seriously to the length of absence necessary to acquire the promised independence, the pain felt in quitting his native country, and the improbability, when once away, of returning to it, probably occasioned distaste to the expedition altogether. The navy or army promised all he now wanted,—present

\* An allusion to the character of Goldsmith's translations, originating probably from Griffiths himself, appears in the *Monthly Review* for August, 1776, in the article on the Poet's translation of Scarron's *Comic Romance*.

† From the MS. collection of the late Mr. Heber.



provision and less permanent removal from England. To one of these departments his medical services were now tendered, induced by the example of several acquaintance, and the remembrance of Grainger and Smollett, who, in the spirit of adventure, or for a more extensive observation of mankind, pursued a similar course in early life.

Either of the services could be joined with a less expensive outfit than that required for an India voyage, and might be quitted with greater facility if uncongenial to his feelings. Prompted by such considerations, he presented himself at Surgeons' Hall for examination as an hospital mate, in December, 1758; and to the utter discomfiture of all his projects, and with feelings nearly akin to despair, was rejected as unqualified.

Whether this mortifying result arose from want of knowledge of minute anatomy, which having been long from the schools might be easily forgotten, or of operative surgery, to which, contemplating physic as his peculiar province, he might not have paid sufficient attention; whether his memory or presence of mind were overpowered by the apprehension felt by every surgical tyro on such occasions; or he was disconcerted by the banter of some such examiner as Roderick Random encountered, it is vain to enquire. The circumstance is curious in itself, and is now for the first time disclosed. No communication on the subject appears to have been made to his relatives, nor was it even surmised by any of his acquaintance or biographers,

although at the moment no doubt known to a few more intimate associates, who were sufficiently reserved to keep the secret. The unexplained relinquishment of the India appointment first excited suspicion of the fact in the mind of the writer, which was confirmed by a rumour, vague indeed and unsatisfactory, of the same nature, communicated by an eminent physician.\* The cause of such abandonment then became obvious, rejection for one branch of service necessarily disqualifying him for all; and by the regulations of medical bodies, no re-examination of an unsuccessful applicant could be had under a period of three or six months, for the advantage of further study. Accident, therefore, or something akin to accident, did for him what it has done for others of our eminent men, who had determined to proceed abroad in the pursuit of wealth—it kept him at home, to acquire fame; and as in the instances of Burke and Burns, to elevate the literature of our country.

The following extract is from the books of the College of Surgeons; it appears he was the only unsuccessful candidate on that day:—

“ At a Court of Examiners held at the Theatre, 21st December, 1758. Present (*blank*).

\* The late Dr. Maton, physician to the King; through my friend Mr. Copland Hutchinson.—Dr. M. believed he had been rejected at *Apothecaries'* Hall, but on inquiry this proved to be an error. Surgeons' Hall was then searched, and the fact discovered.

(Here several names precede and follow that of the Poet, as having passed for the medical service of the army and navy ; but it is only necessary to quote the one preceding him, from its connection with the situation for which he was examined.)

“ James Bernard, mate to an hospital. Oliver Goldsmith, found not qualified for ditto.”

## CHAP. VIII.

QUARREL WITH MR. GRIFFITHS, AND LETTER TO HIM.—  
KENRICK.—LETTER TO REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH.—VOL-  
TAIRE'S LIFE.—EDWARD PURDON.—ENQUIRY INTO POLITE  
LEARNING.—CONNECTION WITH THE CRITICAL REVIEW.

THE results attending this failure were more serious to the distressed candidate than merely momentary vexation. Unable, from not obtaining the expected appointment, to repay certain pecuniary obligations incurred upon the occasion to his former employer in the *Monthly Review*, he found not only his literary and moral character attacked in that journal in consequence of this default, but a story repeated in conversation in the same ungenerous strain by its proprietor, as, indeed, it continued to be by him to a late period of life in the literary circles of London. The fact says little for the generosity or forbearance of Griffiths, who, from the letters of Grainger to Percy\*, appears to have been considered by the former a sharp tradesman; and if we may judge from his conduct to Goldsmith, not the mildest of creditors.

The best apology for this seeming harshness is,

\* In the possession of Mr. W. R. Mason.—One of the cautions given to Percy is not to trust to any verbal agreement with the bookseller.

that when mentioning the anecdote even within the present century to more than one surviving auditor, he did not fully know, or at least never told, the real situation of the unhappy debtor—the attempt at Surgeons' Hall—his rejection, and consequent inability to meet any pecuniary obligations. All this, indeed, the Poet, deeming it a species of disgrace, and a reflection upon his professional talents, kept secret, or, if known, it was confined to the knowledge of a few. Something of the severity shown him by Griffiths may have been owing to this reserve, which he was unwilling to throw off, and his story of apology may have appeared therefore to the bookseller a fiction. The imputations cast upon his character are still to be seen in the pages of the Review; the contradiction which a sense of the injustice done him eventually called forth, occurs only after an interval of two years. On this account, as well as to explain a letter to which it gave rise, the disagreement requires to be noticed at length.

When about to appear before the examining surgeons, his apparel being defective, application was made to Griffiths for the use of such as was deemed of a more suitable description. The precise use to be made of it appears not to have been stated, dreading perhaps publicity in case of the failure that actually occurred; but an intimation was given that he had obtained, or expected to obtain, a situation in the army, which without an appropriate dress to appear in might be withheld. The request

was acceded to; the bookseller became security to a tailor; the conditions of this favour being immediate return of the clothes to the former when the purpose had been served, or speedy discharge of the debt; while the distressed author, in order to evince his sense of gratitude, immediately furnished four articles for the Review, which stand first in the number for December, 1758, and in the copy before noticed are there acknowledged as his by the proprietor.\* The failure to pass, as may be supposed, precluded fulfilment of the promise to pay. Driven to despair by ill success, forgetful of the imputations to which breach of agreement by withholding the clothes might give rise, or urged by necessities pressing and irresistible, increased by additional expense incurred by preliminary arrangements for the examination, the articles supplied were, instead of being returned, consigned for the supply of immediate wants, to the pawnbroker.

Here they were soon discovered by Griffiths, who becoming alarmed for the safety of some books lent to the Poet, probably to review, wrote him an abusive letter. The reply seems to have been couched in a tone of apology, conscious of not having done strictly right, or as he emphatically expresses it, of the occasional "meannesses

\* These are, "Enquiries concerning the first Inhabitants, &c. of Europe;"—"Introduction to Languages;"—"Κεταλογία: sive Tragediarum Delectus;"—"Translation of Tully's Tusculan Disputations."



which poverty unavoidably brings with it." This seems not to have satisfied the creditor: he rejoined, in a communication filled with reproaches of the most injurious nature, and finally threatened him with the utmost severity, as it would seem, of the law.

A second and very affecting letter from the accused has been preserved by the accuser, who never exhibited, and probably wished not to be known, what contains so strong a reflection on his moderation or humanity, and which is now for the first time made public. From this, the past and present necessities of poor Goldsmith appear to have been extreme, reaching nearly to the point of desperation; his mental anxieties no doubt aggravated by the recent disappointment. The original, now before the writer, is without date or place of residence, but endorsed by Griffiths, "Received in January, 1759."

"SIR,

"I know of no misery but a gaol to which my own imprudencies and your letter seem to point. I have seen it inevitable these three or four weeks, and, by heavens! request it as a favour—as a favour that may prevent somewhat more fatal. I have been some years struggling with a wretched being—with all that contempt that indigence brings with it—with all those strong passions which make contempt insupportable. What, then, has a gaol that is formidable? I shall at least have

the society of wretches, and such is, to me, true society. I tell you again and again, I am now neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing, but I will be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall make; thus far, at least, I do not act the sharper, since, unable to pay my debts one way, I would willingly give some security another. No, Sir, had I been a sharper, had I been possessed of less good nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances.

“I am guilty, I own, of meannesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it: my reflections are filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with any remorse for being a villain; that may be a character you unjustly charge me with. Your books, I can assure you, are neither pawned nor sold, but in the custody of a friend from whom my necessities obliged me to borrow some money: whatever becomes of my person, you shall have them in a month. It is very possible both the reports you have heard and your own suggestions may have brought you false information with respect to my character; it is very possible that the man whom you now regard with detestation may inwardly burn with grateful resentment. It is very possible that, upon a second perusal of the letter I sent you, you may see the workings of a mind strongly agitated with gratitude and jealousy. If such circumstances should appear, at least spare invective till my book with

Mr. Dodsley shall be published, and then perhaps you may see the bright side of a mind, when my professions shall not appear the dictates of necessity, but of choice.

“You seem to think Dr. Milner knew me not. Perhaps so ; but he was a man I shall ever honour ; but I have friendships only with the dead ! I ask pardon for taking up so much time ; nor shall I add to it by any other professions than that I am,

“Sir, your humble servant,

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.\*

“P.S. I shall expect impatiently the result of your resolutions.”

The expressions, “I am now neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing,” seem to imply either resentment at the terms applied to him, or that the demand was disputed ; while the promise to “be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall make” shows at least anxiety to meet the difficulty in the most honourable manner. The dispute appears to have been settled for a time by a short compilation written by the Poet, and advertised for publication, as will appear, by Griffiths, in the following month (February) ; but either this did not produce peace between the parties, or some new cause of quarrel arose. On the appearance of the Enquiry into Polite Learning,

\* From the MS. collection of the late Mr. Heber.

a few months afterwards, the writer who succeeded to Goldsmith's place in the Monthly Review, in addition to sharp literary strictures, breaks out into the following extreme personalities and imputations on private character :—

“ It requires a good deal of art and temper for a man to write consistently against the dictates of his own heart. Thus, notwithstanding our author talks so familiarly of *us*, the great, and affects to be thought to stand in the rank of patrons, we cannot help thinking that in more places than one he has betrayed in himself the man he so severely condemns for drawing his quill to take a purse. We are even so firmly convinced of this, that we dare put the question home to his conscience, whether he never experienced the unhappy situation he so feelingly describes, in that of a literary understrapper? His remarking him as coming down from his garret to rummage the bookseller's shop for materials to work upon, and the knowledge he displays of his minutest labours, give great reason to suspect he may himself have had recourse to the bad trade of book-making. *Fronti nulla fides*. We have heard of many a writer who, ‘patronised only by his bookseller,’ has, nevertheless, affected the gentleman in print, and talked full as cavalierly as our author himself. We have even known one hardy enough publicly to stigmatise men of the first rank in literature for their immoralities\*, while con-

\* A note is subjoined evidently aimed at Goldsmith :—“ Even

scious himself of labouring under the infamy of having by the vilest and meanest actions, forfeited all pretensions to honour and honesty.

“If such men as these, boasting a liberal education and pretending to genius, practise at the same time those arts which bring the sharper to the cart’s tail or the pillory, need our author wonder that ‘learning partakes the contempt of its professors.’”

Several other inuendoes nearly as offensive and hypothetically conveyed, seem so far to exceed the latitude of public criticism or the private provocation given, as to occasion feelings of indignation in the reader. Tried by the standard of strict morality, it may be true that an offence, if so harsh a name be applicable to such an act in his situation, was committed; but looking to the attendant circumstances, which must ever influence our judgment in passing sentence upon all human creatures, it will appear to be of a venial character. Besides, the remembrance of former services, his connection with the journal now made the vehicle of slander, the confession of its proprietor on other occasions that he was an ingenious, and the conviction which he must have felt of his being a distressed, man, ought to have withheld language which could be applied only to the worst characters in society.

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our author seems to have wandered from his subject into calumny, when, speaking of the Marquis D’Argens, he tells us ‘he attempts to add the character of a philosopher to the vices of a debauchee.’”

One apology may be adduced for Griffiths, that the animadversions were not his own. They came, as he states, in a document already referred to of the writers in that work, from a person in his employ, afterwards known as a general libeller, whose characteristic virulence probably went beyond the instructions received. And so conscious was the former, whose general character exempts him from the charge of malignity, of the unwarrantable nature of the accusations, that shortly afterwards, in noticing another work, known to be by Goldsmith, *The Bee*, his traducer was desired to treat it in the most favourable manner in the Review. This, as may be supposed, did not satisfy the Poet: he retained a strong sense of the injury attempted to be inflicted on his moral character; and several of his friends representing the gross nature of the attack, the following denial, or retraction, of the meaning intended to be conveyed, appears in the month of June, 1762, in reviewing the *Citizen of the World*:—

“Although the Chinese philosopher has nothing Asiatic about him, and is as errant an European as the philosopher of Malmesbury, yet he has some excellent remarks upon men, manners, and things, as the phrase goes.

“But the public have been already made sufficiently acquainted with the merits of these entertaining Letters, which were first printed in *The Ledger*, and are supposed to have contributed not a little towards the success of that paper.



They are said to be the work of the lively and ingenious writer of an Enquiry into the present State of Polite Learning in Europe;—a writer whom it seems we undesignedly offended by some strictures on the conduct of many of our modern scribblers. As the observation was entirely general in its intention, we were surprised to hear that this gentleman had imagined himself in any degree pointed at, as we conceive nothing can be more illiberal in a writer, or more foreign to the character of a literary journal, than to descend to the meanness of personal reflection. It is hoped that a charge of this sort can never be justly brought against the Monthly Review.”

No good feeling was re-established between the parties, notwithstanding this attempt to explain away the offensive insinuations, nor is it believed they ever afterwards had intercourse; Goldsmith never forgot the outrage, and Griffiths probably did not forgive him whom he had injured. As evidence of the hostility that continued to exist, it was remarked that in the Review, his productions, excepting his poems which all the world admired, usually experienced an unfavourable reception; and a few months after the Poet's death, a charge of this kind was even advanced by more than one correspondent of that journal against its conductors. A reply to one of these accusers appeared in September, 1774:—“As to what this correspondent surmises of a prejudice against an old friend and associate, Dr. G., he may rest assured that there is

no foundation for it. But it is ever our custom to be sparing of our compliments to each other."

The writer of the libel in the Review was Kenrick, one of those unhappy persons who, with considerable talents, acquire notice chiefly by offences against good taste and moral propriety. A native of Hertfordshire, and brought up to a mechanical art, said to be that of a rule or scale maker, he deserted it with the view of pursuing literature as a profession. How he received his education is unknown; the degree of LL.D. is believed to have come from a Scottish university. A love of notoriety, a jealous and perverse temper, increased often to violence by habits of intemperance, led him to assail all who enjoyed reputation, or whose success excited his envy, often avowedly, as if courting a contest by reply, and never long affecting concealment. He was thus at war with nearly all his contemporaries: 'his hand was against every man;' and if theirs was withheld from him, it arose from that impunity accorded to such as from want of principle and character become a species of privileged libellers. He was therefore rarely answered; but indeed this was scarcely necessary, for he frequently answered himself: the fact is well known with regard to some of his more serious productions; and in the search for materials for this work he has been frequently tracked in the periodical publications of the time, vituperating on one day the person whom he had lauded the preceding.

A graver charge than envy or jealousy—that

of desperate malignity—applies to his conduct in 1772, when, after having long flattered Garrick in order to secure the reception of his pieces on the stage, he turned upon him in consequence of a trifling disagreement with an infamous and unfounded charge connected with the retirement of Isaac Bickerstaffe from the country; and when proceedings were commenced against him in the Court of King's Bench, made at once the most abject submission and retraction. When afterwards asked by Evans the bookseller,\* how he could bring so infamous a charge against Mr. Garrick? he replied, "he did not believe him guilty, but did it to plague the fellow." The honest bookseller observed, on telling the story when collecting the works of Goldsmith, "I desire to add, I never more conversed with such a man."

He wrote, and frequently with ability, upon a variety of subjects,—metaphysics, morality, poetry, the drama, satire, translation, lexicography, pamphlets on a variety of temporary topics; and for many years was a professional reviewer,—first in the *Monthly Review* from the termination of Goldsmith's engagement, whose place he appears to have filled immediately, till 1766; and in the *London Review*, which he established, and conducted from 1775 till his death in 1779. He gave lectures

\* Father of Mr. Evans, the respectable and well-known book auctioneer of Pall Mall.

on Shakspeare ; and, conceiving he had discovered the perpetual motion, also upon natural philosophy. His chief poetical work, though nothing from his pen has survived himself, is “ Epistles to Lorenzo,” in the octo-syllabic measure, which are reputed to breathe a strain of infidelity ; his best play is “ Falstaff’s Wedding,” considered by some, perhaps from his own encomiums in the newspapers, a good imitation of Shakspeare, though represented only once or twice upon the stage. In 1765 he attacked Dr. Johnson’s edition of Shakspeare, and very confidently told the public that the great critic knew “ neither any one art nor any one language.” Reply was beneath the dignity of the assailed, who was also displeased with a student of Oxford, one of his zealous admirers, for doing what he disdained to do for himself ; but a sarcasm proved as effectual, and settled in a few words the station in society of the offender. When his works on one occasion were mentioned, Goldsmith said he had never heard of them ; upon which Johnson observed, “ Sir, he is one of the many who have made themselves *public*, without making themselves *known*.” The general opinion of his literary brethren was pretty well expressed by Mr. Cuthbert Shaw, under the name of Mercurius Spur, in the poem of “ The Race :”—

“ Dreaming of genius which he never had,  
Half wit, half fool, half critic, and half mad ;  
Seizing, like Shirley, on the poet’s lyre,  
With all the rage, but not one spark of fire ;

Eager for slaughter, and resolved to tear  
From others' brows that wreath he must not wear,—  
Next Kenrick came: all furious, and replete  
With brandy, malice, pertness, and conceit;  
Unskill'd in classic lore, through envy blind  
To all that's beauteous, learned, or refined;  
For faults alone behold the savage prowl,  
With Reason's offal glut his ravening soul:  
Pleas'd with his prey, its inmost blood he drinks,  
And mumbles, paws, and turns it—till it stinks."

The order of time has been in some degree anticipated by the consequences arising from the unlucky repulse of the Poet at Surgeons' Hall, which, it has been remarked, he studiously concealed from the knowledge of his friends. In the following letter to his brother, written at the period of the preceding dispute, the voyage is still mentioned as of probable accomplishment, though with an indifference that shows it occupied few of his thoughts; literary projects, indeed, not professional pursuits, or anticipations of Indian scenes or adventures, form its subject. The description of his own person and manners indicates little of the personal vanity of which he has been accused: the former is an accurate portrait; the latter by no means so true, being so far from the reserved and suspicious character he paints himself, that there were few whose mind and emotions were more on the surface of their general behaviour, excepting when at times depressed, or when soured by disappointments. He possessed no power of concealment, and suffered in the opinion of many by the want of that reserve in which he thought himself

superabundant. This Letter, though without date, was written early in February, 1759 :—

*“ To the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, at Lowfield, near Ballymore, in Westmeath, Ireland.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Your punctuality in answering a man whose trade is writing, is more than I had reason to expect ; and yet you see me generally fill a whole sheet, which is all the recompence I can make for being so frequently troublesome. The behaviour of Mr. Mills and Mr. Lawder is a little extraordinary. However, their answering neither you nor me, is a sufficient indication of their disliking the employment which I assigned them. As their conduct is different from what I had expected, so I have made an alteration in mine. I shall, the beginning of next month, send over two hundred and fifty books\*, which are all that I fancy can be well sold among you, and I would have you make some distinction in the persons who have subscribed. The money, which will amount to sixty pounds, may be left with Mr. Bradley as soon as possible. I am not certain but I shall quickly have occasion for it.

“ I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East India voyage, nor are my resolutions altered ; though at the same time, I must confess, it gives me some pain to think I am almost

\* The Enquiry into Polite Literature. His previous remarks apply to the subscription.



beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years\* of disappointment, anguish, and study have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me, yet I dare venture to say that if a stranger saw us both he would pay me the honours of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eyebrows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig; and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child.

“Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behaviour. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor

\* In this there seems to be an error; he had not quitted Ireland quite seven years, but he might not have seen his brother for some time previous to his departure. Precision in dates, however, was not then a virtue in Ireland. The alleged seniority of his brother also would appear to have been overstated.

drink ; have contracted a hesitating disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself ; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it. Whence this romantic turn that all our family are possessed with ? Whence this love for every place and every country but that in which we reside,—for every occupation but our own ?—this desire of fortune, and yet this eagerness to dissipate ? I perceive, my dear Sir, that I am at intervals for indulging this splenetic manner, and following my own taste, regardless of yours.

“ The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar are judicious and convincing ; I should, however, be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous, and divested of strong passions (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure), he may do very well in your college ; for it must be owned, that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him but your own. It is impossible to conceive how much may be done by a proper education at home. A boy, for instance, who understands perfectly well Latin, French, arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking ; and these parts of learning should be carefully incul-

cated, let him be designed for whatever calling he will.

“Above all things, let him never touch a romance or novel: these paint beauty in colours more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept—take my word for it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous,—may distress but cannot relieve him.\* Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear Sir, to your son thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle’s example be placed before his eyes. I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher, while I was exposing myself to the approaches of insidious cunning; and often by being, even with my nar-

\* “Slow rises worth by poverty deprest.”

JOHNSON.

row finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice, and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. When I am in the remotest part of the world, tell him this, and perhaps he may improve from my example. But I find myself again falling into my gloomy habits of thinking.

“My mother, I am informed, is almost blind; even though I had the utmost inclination to return home, under such circumstances I could not, for to behold her in distress without a capacity for relieving her from it would add too much to my splenetic habit. Your last letter was much too short; it should have answered some queries I had made in my former. Just sit down as I do, and write forward until you have filled all your paper. It requires no thought, at least from the ease with which my own sentiments rise when they are addressed to you. For, believe me, my head has no share in all I write; my heart dictates the whole. Pray, give my love to Bob Bryanton, and entreat him from me not to drink. My dear Sir, give me some account about poor Jenny.\* Yet her husband loves her; if so, she cannot be unhappy.

“I know not whether I should tell you—yet why should I conceal these trifles, or indeed any thing from you? There is a book of mine will be published in a few days—the Life of a very extraor-

\* His sister, Mrs. Johnston; her marriage, like that of Mrs. Hodson, was private, but in pecuniary matters much less fortunate.

dinary man ; no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title that it is no more than a catch-penny. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds. When published I shall take some method of conveying it to you, unless you may think it dear of the postage, which may amount to four to five shillings. However, I fear you will not find an equivalent of amusement.

“Your last letter, I repeat it, was too short ; you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroi-comical poem which I sent you. You remember I intended to introduce the hero of the poem as lying in a paltry alehouse. You may take the following specimen of the manner, which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies may be described somewhat in this way :—

“The window, patch’d with paper, lent a ray,  
That feebly showed the state in which he lay ;  
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread,  
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread ;  
The game of goose was there expos’d to view,  
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew ;  
The Seasons, fram’d with listing, found a place,  
And Prussia’s monarch showed his lamp-black face.  
The morn was cold; he views with keen desire  
A rusty grate unconscious of a fire ;  
An unpaid reckoning on the frieze was scored,  
And five crack’d teacups dress’d the chimney-board.”

“And now imagine after his soliloquy the landlord to make his appearance, in order to dun him for the reckoning :—

“ Not with that face, so servile and so gay,  
That welcomes every stranger that can pay ;  
With sulky eye he smok'd the patient man,  
Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began,” &c.

“ All this is taken, you see, from nature. It is a good remark of Montaign's, that the wisest men often have friends with whom they do not care how much they play the fool. Take my present follies as instances of my regard. Poetry is a much easier and more agreeable species of composition than prose ; and could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet. I am resolved to leave no space, though I should fill it up only by telling you, what you know very well already, I mean that

“ I am,

“ Your most affectionate Friend and Brother,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

We may be permitted to regret, from the specimen furnished of the intended poem, that a design so fitted for the display of his humour went no further. The subject appears to be as he thinks, original, and unhappy experience in all probability, had enabled him to give the details as he says “ from nature ;” for there is an air of verisimilitude about the scene that renders it difficult to believe it was not one he had known by experience. With a few additions, the lines are introduced in the account of a club of authors in the *Citizen of the World* ; and but for having thus been used in a



previous work, would, no doubt, have been applied in detail to the description of the alehouse in the *Deserted Village*, a hint or two only being now retained in that poem.

The other production mentioned with a degree of coyness in this letter,—the *Life of Voltaire*,—completed within a period of four weeks, as he informs us, and acknowledged as a sacrifice to necessity, would appear to be that already alluded to, with which he intended to repay Griffiths for the apparel, the subject of dispute, by the following announcement in the *Public Advertiser*, 7th February, 1759:—“Speedily will be published, *Memoirs of the Life of Monsieur de Voltaire; with Critical Observations on the Writings of that celebrated Poet, and a new Translation of the Henriade.* Printed for R. Griffiths, in Paternoster Row.”

This seems a solitary advertisement, no other having been found. And notwithstanding every diligence on the part of those most accustomed to such inquiries, it has not been discovered as a separate work; but after a long search the writer found it printed in detached portions of the *Lady's Magazine* for 1761.

Of the general character of this piece little need be said. What he so lightly estimated himself cannot be highly valued by others in consequence of its deficiency in facts; but the reflections and style possess his accustomed qualities of elegance and vivacity. Considered as an exercise, though a

slight one, of his pen, it will interest the literary inquirer; and as it is not likely to be published at length and indeed is not to be found, such passages as admit of being detached from the narrative will find admission in another place. The first paragraph, varied slightly in expression, is in thought similar to that which introduces the memoir of Parnell. "That life which has been wholly employed in the study, is properly seen only in the author's writings; there is no variety to entertain, nor adventure to interest us in the calm anecdotes of such an existence. Cold criticism is all the reader must expect, instead of instructive history."

The version of the *Henriade* to which it was meant to form an introduction, was again announced singly, in April\*; but like the *Life*, this form of publication seems to have been abandoned by the publisher. It is to be found, however, where he probably thought it more immediately useful, in his *Magazine* (the *Grand*) for September 1759, a book of the poem being published in each succeeding number, and is there stated to be for the first time rendered into English. Goldsmith is believed to have had little more to do with it than the revision and correction, which a correct taste for poetry and friendship towards the translator, an unhappy follower of letters, might supply.

\* "Next month will be published, elegantly printed in one pocket volume, *The Henriade, an Heroic Poem*. By Mons. Voltaire. Translated into English verse. Printed for R. Griffiths, in Paternoster Row."—*Public Advertiser*, April 22, 1759.

This person is said to have been Edward Purdon, an old college friend,\* and like himself the son of a clergyman. Being of a thoughtless turn and dissipated habits, he enlisted as a private soldier after quitting the University; but becoming tired of this mode of life, he procured his discharge, commenced professional writer in London, and renewed his acquaintance with Goldsmith, of whose bounty he frequently partook, and is believed to have been the cause of some of the difficulties and imprudences of his good-natured friend. Not destitute of talents, a necessitous life and ill-regulated passions interfered with their reputable exertion. Poverty long continued, particularly in those who have known a contrary lot, too often begets disregard of intellectual as well as of moral pre-eminence; and he who under favourable circumstances might acquire fame, when pursued by want cannot always become even respectable. He produced nothing therefore worth remembering. Compelled to have recourse to such fleeting topics as promised immediate subsistence, he seems, except in the instance of this translation, never to have ascended above petty pamphlets, contributions to periodical works and newspapers, and that never-failing topic for all writers good and bad—the theatre. For an abusive pamphlet against the performers of Drury Lane, particularly Mossop,

\* “1744, *Julii* 28<sup>o</sup>—*Edwardus Purdon Pens—Filius Edwardi Clerici.—Annum agens 15—Natus in Comitatu Limerick—Educatus sub ferula Ma : Jessop—Tutor Mr. Holt.*”

he was obliged to make an abject apology, to which was subjoined another from his publisher, Pottinger, who pleaded ignorance of its contents, which appeared in the London Chronicle, Oct. 13—15, 1759.

A life such as this, where the labour is great, the reward little, and the reputation more than questionable, seems the consummation of human misery ; yet how often is it embraced in the first glow of youthful hope or ambition by such as have or have not qualifications for the pursuit, in the forlorn hope of acquiring distinction ! Relieved frequently by Goldsmith when denial would have been no more than prudence to himself, Purdon was long known as one of his pensioners : he saw much of his benefactor, was not ungrateful for the assistance rendered, and related many anecdotes of him, of which a few only have travelled down to us, preserved by casual auditors. He died as he had lived,—in penury ; and it was, perhaps, with reference to him and others whom he avows to have known in the same unfortunate situation, and it is to be feared with the remembrance of some sufferings of his own, that we find the following passage on the effects of hunger in “Animated Nature :”—“The lower race of animals, when satisfied for the instant moment, are perfectly happy ; but it is otherwise with man : his mind anticipates distress, and feels the pangs of want even before it arrests him. Thus the mind being continually harassed by the situation, it at length influences the con-

stitution, and unfits it for all its functions. Some cruel disorder, but no way like hunger, seizes the unhappy sufferer; so that almost all those men who have thus long lived by chance, and whose every day may be considered as a happy escape from famine, are known at last to die in reality of a disorder caused by hunger, but which, in common language, is often called a broken heart. *Some of these I have known myself when very little able to relieve them.*"

To the unhappy existence of this poor man more direct allusion is made in the well-known epitaph on him, in his poetical works, partly taken from the French, in which notwithstanding the smile created by its point, there is something of tenderness for an old acquaintance.

Towards the end of March, 1759, was published, for the Dodsleys, the piece from which a portion of fame and money were expected to accrue, "An Enquiry into the present state of Polite Learning in Europe." No reasonable means were neglected to make it known through the usual channels. The first announcement appears in the London Chronicle newspaper, April 3—5., and repeated in the Public Advertiser soon afterwards, April 26—28. An extract occupying six columns was given in the former. A long letter from a correspondent, directing attention to the work, found place in the Gentleman's Magazine, followed by a favourable, though not indiscriminately laudatory, notice in the Critical Review for April; while in the Annual

Register, commenced and conducted by Burke for the first seven years, it is likewise mentioned with approbation.

Thus introduced, and showing proofs of coming from a man of genius and considerable observation and learning, it was favourably received. The style has all his characteristic perspicuity; more terse perhaps, and epigrammatic than his other writings,—qualities which, while they give pungency to a sentence, impart something of the appearance of labour. It is, however, free from stiffness. But the promise of the title-page appeared obviously of a nature too extensive for any one man, however high his attainments or numerous his opportunities for observation, to treat in a satisfactory manner. The means and the leisure of Goldsmith were certainly inadequate to the purpose. He had enjoyed the advantage, indeed, of seeing France, Germany, and Italy, in his tour; but under circumstances not favourable to research, or for adequate acquaintance with their men of letters, and for a period too short for any diligence to acquire the requisite information by personal enquiry.

Polite literature, unlike science, has not the same fixed principles in every country. The progress or limits of mathematics or of astronomy, of chemistry or of the branches of natural philosophy in one kingdom, may be investigated by the native or another competently informed, with the certainty of arriving at pretty accurate conclusions. But the state of Polite Letters is more variable and to be



very differently estimated, for scarcely any two nations possess precisely similar standards of taste. Thus, France and England differ widely in their estimate of poetry and the drama, and quite as much so perhaps, in the arts of design. We cannot procure Shakspeare and Milton to be received with all the consideration due to their extraordinary powers, in France; and in return, we scarcely allow that country to possess any poetry except dramatic, of a high order. It requires therefore, not merely an intimate acquaintance with the language and history, but with the genius, manners, opinions, prejudices, and local peculiarities of a people, for a foreigner to enter upon the consideration of their polite literature, in order to appreciate it thoroughly or to decide upon it justly. To attempt to do therefore, for all Europe what is so difficult to perform for one of its states, nay, what few writers can successfully accomplish for their own country, presented obstacles which no individual could expect to overcome. The title adopted on the occasion, implying a range which could not be taken in a duodecimo, was perhaps not judiciously chosen. But the spirit of the remarks, the information although more limited than we desire, and the ingenuity of his views, render the work as coming from his pen worthy of perusal.

Its weaker points were a somewhat affected, for it could scarcely be real, depreciation of science; some contradictions; a few paradoxes and novel-

ties, advanced probably with the design of provoking discussion or drawing attention to the book, although such motives are expressly disclaimed.

“Dissenting from received opinions may frequently render this essay liable to correction ; yet the reader may be assured that a passion for singularity never gives rise to the error. Novelty is not permitted to usurp the place of reason.”—Remembering, however, the humourous account given by George Primrose of the supposed publication of his paradoxes, and of the disappointment experienced by their being unnoticed, it is difficult to believe that Goldsmith did not shadow out himself in the hero of the tale, when the latter is made to describe himself as full of importance and expecting the “whole learned world to rise to oppose them, but then he was ready to oppose the whole learned world ;” but the learned said nothing about him or his paradoxes, and he “suffered the cruellest mortification, neglect.” \*

One of the positions strenuously maintained in this work says little for the merit of the employment of which he had now sufficient experience, that of professional reviewer. He estimates criticism and the increase of critics and commentators as indicative of the decay of polite letters. “Learning may be distinguished into three periods. Its commencement, or the age of poets ; its maturity, or the age of philosophers ; and its decline, or the

\* Vicar of Wakefield, chap. xx.

age of critics." "When polite learning was no more, then it was those literary lawgivers made the most formidable appearance. *Corruptissima republica plurimæ leges.*"—"Wherever the poet was permitted to improve his native language, polite learning flourished; where the critic undertook the same task, it never rose to any degree of perfection."

"Other depravations," he continues, "in the republic of letters, such as affectation in some popular writer leading others into a vicious imitation; political struggles in the state; a depravity of morals among the people; ill-directed encouragement or no encouragement from the great: these have been often found to co-operate in the decline of literature; but an increase of criticism has always portended a decay."\* It may be remarked that Dr. Johnson, though so eminent in the art, when he condescended to exercise it, which was not often, speaks in a strain scarcely more favourable of "the disquisitions of criticism, which, in my opinion, is only to be ranked among the subordinate and instrumental arts."†

This opinion is no doubt true; for though good criticism requires talent, it is talent of a secondary order. Great critics indeed, such as Johnson himself, like great writers, are rare; but for every purpose of instruction or amusement, for the original ideas thrown out, or development of the

\* Enquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

† See last number of the Rambler.

subject in hand, the best periodical critic is inferior to an original writer even of a middling order; for the latter must give much time and consideration to matters on which the former commonly can bestow little; no reader of taste will take up a commentary, who can refer to the original. Whether the opinion of Goldsmith be correct that the increase of critics, fearful beyond all precedent in our own day, indicates the decline of letters, may be doubted; they are but the shadows of authors, and as naturally follow the substance from which they emanate and of whose existence they furnish evidence. But from the numbers daily starting into existence in every shape and place, inexperienced in life, in letters, and often in judgment, it would seem as if the calling required a very moderate portion of ingenuity, and were pursued rather by the journeymen of Genius than by Genius herself. Writers of very original powers cannot long pursue such an occupation solely; like him indeed, whose opinions are here adduced, they may be compelled to the task for a time by necessity, or when entering upon a literary career, in order to learn the mere mechanical parts of the art; but it soon becomes irksome, and we gladly fly from examination of the ideas of other men to the more grateful exercise of our own.\*

\* A passage in the "Enquiry into Polite Learning" seems to have given origin to a celebrated simile in the Letters of Junius, applied by that writer to the Duke of Grafton, when he says of Lord Chatham, "after going through all the resolutions

One of the inconveniences of poverty, besides its positive privations, is not only the bar thrown in our way to pursue the path we wish, but the frequent necessity of adopting that which we dislike. Thus, the wayward fate of Goldsmith seemed constantly to thwart the bent of his inclinations as well in life as in letters. It caused him to enter the university in a situation he disliked if not despised; it made him a traveller on foot through Europe when his ambition was to seem of consequence; an usher at a school, when detesting the employment; and the frequent companion of persons whom he avowedly despised, and from whose society he wished to escape. At a future period it compelled him in great measure to desist from the cultivation of poetry, in which he delighted; to become the writer of histories, which however popular and excellent of their class, he never thought conducive to his fame; of other compilations he did not think proper to own; and at this moment, while condemning criticism as the bane of polite letters, forced him, in order to earn

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of political chemistry, he has arrived at the *caput mortuum* of vitriol in your Grace."—Goldsmith says, speaking of the difficulties of introducing a play upon the stage, "Our poet's performances must undergo a process truly chemical before it is presented to the public. It must be tried in the manager's fire, strained through a licenser, and purified in the review or the newspaper of the day. At this rate, before it can come to a private table, it may probably be a mere *caput mortuum*, and only proper entertainment for the licenser, manager, or critic himself."

a scanty subsistence, to pursue the very occupation he stigmatised, that of a professional critic.

Among the persons connected with literature to whom he became known some time in the year 1758, was Mr. Archibald Hamilton, printer of the *Critical Review*, who saw so much in him to esteem as a man and to admire as a writer, that he became one of his firmest friends. He invited him to his house in the vicinity of Chelsea, where the daughter of this gentleman remembered to have seen him frequently, relieved him subsequently from occasional pecuniary difficulties, and willing to gain all the talent he could for the journal with which he was connected, is said to have been the first to introduce him to Dr. Smollet, then its principal editor. There was likewise some policy in the measure; he was known as an ally of Griffiths, and a violent hostility existing between the rival reviews, it was a means of weakening the enemy.

The precise period at which he commenced contributor to this work is uncertain; not later certainly than January 1759, for in that month appear two of the articles traced to him, reviews of Marriott's *Female Conduct*, a poem, and Barrett's translation of Ovid's *Epistles*. These, with several others, and a variety of his unacknowledged essays, were collected by Mr. Thomas Wright, printer, to whom allusion has been made, then pursuing his business with Hamilton, and published under the superintendence of Isaac Reed. The other articles contained in this work are on



Butler's Remains, by R. Thyer of Manchester ; Marriott's twentieth Epistle of Horace modernized ; Massinger's Works,—in July ; on Goddard's Translation of Guicciardini's History of Italy ; Works of Mr. W. Hawkins ; Jemima and Louisa, a novel,—in August ; continuation of the paper on Butler's Remains,—in September ; on Dunkin's Epistle to the Earl of Chesterfield : and a rejoinder to the answer of Mr. Hawkins on the previous notice of his works,—in March, 1760.

In this selection, which from internal evidence is correct as far as it goes, it will be observed there is a blank between the months of January and July, yet as his necessities were urgent and no other literary employment can be traced to him at this time, we may be assured he was not idle. Close examination of the Review will enable us to supply the chasm. Criticism indeed cannot always be certainly traced to the actual writer ; but when he is known to have contributed to a work without fixed purpose of concealment, and where in conjunction with style generally we find his favourite phrases, allusions and even sentiments as seen not in one but several of his writings, there will be little difficulty in fixing the authorship with a great degree of precision. Taking these for our guide, among other papers which are doubtful, and therefore not noticed here, the following appear certainly to be his : on Church's edition of Spenser, in the February number ; Langhorne's translation of the Death of Adonis, and the foreign

article, in March ; Ward's Oratory, in April ; the Orphan of China, in May ; Dr. Young's Conjectures on Original Composition, Formey's Philosophical Miscellanies, Van Egmont's and Heyman's Travels through Parts of Europe and Asia Minor, Montesquieu's Miscellaneous Pieces,—in June.

It would be tedious to enumerate the minute species of evidence serving to identify each ; an editor, in the close and laborious examination incumbent upon him to make of the writings of his principal, will discover much that must escape the notice of the casual reader ; but as a specimen of the identity of thought and language employed, the following passage is given from the review of Van Egmont's and Heyman's travels. It relates to a favourite project of the critic himself ; that of penetrating into parts of Asia and bringing back the knowledge of such useful arts as are familiar to its natives, though unknown in Europe. This design as we well know occupied his mind for several years, looking forward to some favourable period for its accomplishment which never occurred, or offered only when it was inexpedient to be pursued. Toward the end of 1761, or commencement of the following year as will be noticed, he drew up a memorial on the subject to government ; a paper likewise containing the substance and even the words of the following passage was printed by him about the same time in the Public Ledger ; he afterwards shaped it into the 108th letter of the Citizen of the World ; and still retain-

ing the same favourite idea, again republished it in the volume of *Essays* (No. xviii.), in 1765.

“One who sits down to read the accounts of modern travellers into Asia, will be apt to fancy that they all travelled in the same track. Their curiosity seems repressed either by fear or indolence, and all are contented if they venture as far as others went before them. Thus, the same cities, towns, ruins, and rivers, are again described to a disgusting repetition. Thus, a man shall go a hundred miles to admire a mountain, only because it was spoken of in Scripture; yet what information can be received from hearing that Agidius Van Egmont went up such a hill only to come down again? Could we see a man set out upon this journey, not with an intent to consider rocks and rivers, but the manners and mechanic inventions, and the imperfect learning of the inhabitants, resolved to penetrate into countries as yet little known, and eager to pry into all their secrets, with a heart not terrified at trifling dangers; if there could be found a man who could unite thus true courage with sound learning, from such a character we might expect much information. Even though what he should bring home was only the manner of dyeing red in the Turkish manner, his labours would be more beneficial to society, than if he had collected all the mutilated inscriptions and idle shells on the coasts of the Levant.”\*

\* A portion of the paper in the *Ledger*, which is merely an

Another of his supposed contributions to the Review is not so well ascertained. From a memorandum of Isaac Reed, prefixed to a manuscript

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expansion of the above passage in the Review, is subjoined for the satisfaction of the reader :—

“ I have frequently been amazed at the ignorance of almost all the European travellers who have penetrated any considerable way eastward into Asia. They have all been influenced by motives of commerce or piety, and their accounts are such as might reasonably be expected from men of a very narrow or very prejudiced education,—the dictates of superstition, or the result of ignorance. Is it not surprising that, in such a variety of adventurers, not one single philosopher should be found among the number ?

“ There is scarcely any country, how rude or uncultivated soever, where the inhabitants are not possessed of some peculiar secrets, either in nature or art, which might be transplanted with success: thus, in Siberian Tartary, the natives extract a strong spirit from milk, which is a secret probably unknown to the chemists of Europe. In the most savage parts of India they are possessed of the secret of dyeing vegetable substances scarlet; and that of refining lead into a metal which, for hardness and colour, is little inferior to silver. \* \* \*

“ I never consider this subject without being surprised that none of those societies so laudably established in England for the promotion of arts and learning have never thought of sending one of their members into the most eastern parts of Asia, to make what discoveries he was able. \* \* \*

“ The only difficulty would remain in choosing a proper person for so arduous an enterprize. He should be a man of philosophical turn, one apt to deduce consequences of general utility from particular occurrences; neither swoln with pride nor hardened by prejudice; neither wedded to one particular system, nor instructed only in one particular science; neither wholly a botanist nor quite an antiquarian: his mind should be tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, and his manners humanized by an intercourse with men. He should be in some measure an enthusiast to the design; fond of travelling, from a rapid imagi-

of Goldsmith in the possession of the writer, and hereafter to be mentioned, it appears that the latter took part with Smollett in the warfare between him and Grainger relative to the translation of Tibullus, and wrote a defence of him on that occasion. The following is the note :—

“ This MS. is one of the productions of, and in the hand-writing of Dr. Goldsmith. It was given to me by Mr. Steevens, who received it from Hamilton, the printer. He had also another MS. by the Doctor, a defence of Dr. Smollett against Dr. Grainger’s attack on him relative to the criticism on Tibullus in the Critical Review. This last I think Mr. Steevens gave to Mr. Beauclerk.”

This piece, though probably still in existence, has not been discovered. It was no doubt written for the Review, but whether published cannot be certainly known until found and compared with the article in that journal for February 1759, which forms Smollett’s defence, and where Grainger’s intemperate and extremely personal reply to the supposed criticism of Smollett on his translation in the previous December, is answered in a manner scarcely less vituperative.\*

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nation and an innate love of change ; furnished with a body capable of sustaining every fatigue, and a heart not easily terrified at danger.”

\* The spirit in which this quarrel was conducted will be seen from the following extracts. The first is from the conclusion of the Review of Goldsmith’s Enquiry into Polite Learning :—

Sixteen pages of the Review are occupied by this paper, which from its tone and language is not likely to be wholly, if at all, from the pen of Goldsmith, or if so, it is unlike any thing else from the same source. Smollett, in return to a personal attack, would no doubt trust only to himself for vindication. But as Goldsmith also appears from the preceding memorandum to have written something in defence of his coadjutor to whom he was probably under obligations, the former may have embodied in the reply such parts of this paper as related to the merely literary demerits of the work

“N.B. We must observe that, against his own conviction, this author has indiscriminately censured the two Reviews, confounding a work undertaken from public spirit (meaning the Critical) with one supported for the sordid purposes of a bookseller. It might not become us to say more on this subject.”

“Whereas one of the owls belonging to the proprietor of the M—thly R — w which answers to the name of Grainger, hath suddenly broke from his mew, where he used to hoot in darkness and peace, and now screeches openly in the face of day, we shall take the first opportunity to chastise this troublesome owl, and drive him back to his original obscurity.”

Note to the Critical Rev. Jan. 1759.

This is beneath the dignity of literary contest, if enraged authors at such moments could remember that they have something to lose in public opinion by unseemly exhibitions of temper. Smollett, however, was not without cause of complaint against the rival journal. His “Reprisal, or Tars of Old England,” is thus characterised in the Monthly Review for Feb. 1757 :—“Calculated for the meridian of Bartholomew Fair; but by some unnatural accident (as jarring elements are sometimes made to unite) exhibited eight nights at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane.”



under consideration ; errors of fact, mistranslation, omissions, and defective or inharmonious lines ; for in these respects, his judgment was fully appreciated, his department in both Reviews being classical literature, poetry, the drama, and polite literature generally. There were few of his contemporaries who brought to such subjects more correct taste, or discriminating judgment.

## CHAP. IX.

RESIDENCE IN GREEN-ARBOUR COURT.—THE BEE.—BUSY BODY.—LADY'S MAGAZINE.—NEWBERY THE BOOKSELLER.—NOTES OF DR. JOHNSON.—SMOLLETT.—BRITISH MAGAZINE.

HIS residence at this period was on the first floor of the house, No. 12, Green-Arbour Court, between the Old Bailey and what was lately Fleet Market. Here he took up his abode toward the end of 1758; the spot was central, in the immediate vicinity of the booksellers, now his chief or only employers, and here he became well known to his literary brethren, was visited by them, and his lodgings well remembered.

This house a few years ago formed the abode, as it appears to have done in his own time, of laborious indigence. The adjoining houses likewise presented every appearance of squalid poverty, every floor being occupied by the poorest class; two of the number fell down from age and dilapidation; and the remainder on the same side of the court, including that in which the Poet resided, standing in the right-hand corner on entering from Farringdon Street by what is called from their steepness and number Break-neck Steps, were taken down some time afterwards to avoid a similar catastrophe. They were four stories in height; the attics had casement windows; and at one time they were pro-

bably inhabited by a superior class of tenants. The site is now occupied by a large building, enclosed by a wall running through the court or square, intended for the stabling and lofts of a waggon-office.

Several intimate associates at this time remembered and repeated after his death, that while here he had formed the strictest resolutions of future economy. His letters to Ireland, and occasional essays written at this time and in these apartments, impress, as we have seen [in a preceding page, in the strongest manner the virtues of prudence; and the same friends stated, that for a time he permitted these lessons to influence his conduct. It may be true he had not much to spend; but imprudence may be as marked in the disbursements of a small income as a great; penury and carelessness in the majority of minds, act and re-act in producing each other; and as this seems to have been his own case, he was willing to try what could be done in shaking off two such inconvenient companions. No keen observer of human life, such as he was, could doubt the truth of his prudential maxims, though many persons, and he himself among the number, not only proud but very sensitive to the contempt which penury brings with it, fail to adopt the obvious remedy for their misfortune by becoming economical; and it is said that Goldsmith, however bent on improving his condition, could not long withstand solicitations for

such small sums as he possessed, by men still poorer and more distressed than himself.

In the beginning of March, 1759, he was seen here, in one of his excursions to London, by the Rev. Mr. Percy, who frequently repeated the anecdote of the visit in conversation, though disinclined to let his name appear as the relater in print.\* His situation seems to have been far from enviable; but as that gentleman justly observed, the circumstances in which he was found, so far from being discreditable in itself, furnished the best evidence of the possession of powers, the unassisted exercise of which elevated him from so unpromising a condition to the enjoyment of all the elegancies of life, and admission to the first societies in London.

“The Doctor,” observed that prelate, “was employed in writing his Enquiry into Polite Learning” (or rather, perhaps, in correcting the proof-sheets, for the work, as already noticed, appeared on the 3d of April following,) in a wretchedly dirty room, in which there was but one chair, and when, from

\* Dr. Campbell thus writes to the Bishop, June 30, 1790:—

“Your anecdotes will embellish my paper highly; and your picture of *Green-Arbour Court* shall be closely copied;—as to the rest, my account of your visit to him there was almost verbatim from my recollection of your words which you have set down in your last. But could there be any harm in letting the world know who the visitant was? Without the circumstance of the dignity of the guest, the contrast will be in a great measure lost, and the matter will lose its grand authority as to the fact. But in this, as in every thing else, your wish shall be a command.”

civility, this was offered to his visitant, he himself was obliged to sit in the window. While they were conversing some one gently rapped at the door, and on being desired to come in, a poor ragged little girl of very decent behaviour entered, who, dropping a curtesy, said, "My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend her a chamber-pot full of coals."

To the few notices gleaned of him while in these lodgings, accident has enabled the writer to make some additions from a quarter seemingly authentic. In the year 1820, long before any thought of this biography was entertained, entering a small shop of miscellaneous articles in the Clapham-road, in order to purchase the first edition (1765) of his *Essays* lying in the window, the owner, a fresh-looking woman between sixty and seventy, in opening the volume, made a variety of affectionate encomiums on his kindness and charity to others when labouring under difficulties himself, intimating at the same time her personal knowledge of the persons befriended. Curiosity thus excited occasioned inquiry, and this person whose features and shop, though not her name, are well remembered, communicated all she professed to recollect.

By her account she was a near relative of the woman who kept the house in Green-Arbour Court, and at the age of seven or eight years went frequently thither, one of the inducements to which was the cakes and sweetmeats given to her and other children of the family by the gentleman who

lodged there ; these they duly valued at the moment, but when afterwards considered as the gifts of one so eminent, the recollection became a source of pride and boast. Another of his amusements consisted in assembling these children in his room, and inducing them to dance to the music of his flute. Of this instrument, as a favourite relaxation from study, he was fond. He was usually, as she subsequently heard when older and induced to inquire more about him, shut up in the room during the day, went out in the evenings, and preserved regular hours. His habits otherwise were sociable, and he had several visitors. One of the companions, whose society gave him particular pleasure, was a respectable watchmaker residing in the same court, celebrated for the possession of much wit and humour\* ; qualities which as they distinguish his own writings, he professes to have sought and cultivated wherever they were to be found. His benevolence, as usual, flowed freely, according to my informant, whenever he had any thing to bestow, and even when he had not, the stream could not always be checked in its current ; an instance of which tells highly to his honour. The landlord of the house having fallen into difficulties was at length arrested ; and Goldsmith, who owed a small sum for rent, being applied to by his wife to assist in the release

\* It is some corroboration of this person's account, that, in searching the newspapers and periodical works of that day, the writer met somewhere with the obituary of a person of this description who resided in Green-Arbour Court.



of her husband, found that, although without money, he did not want resources ; a new suit of clothes was consigned to the pawnbroker, and the amount raised, proving much more than sufficient to discharge his own debt, was handed over for the release of the prisoner. It would be a singular though not an improbable coincidence if this story, related to the writer by the descendant of a person who afterwards became his tailor, and who knew not that it had been previously told, should apply to that identical suit of apparel for which he incurred so much odium and abuse from Griffiths ; and that an effort of active benevolence to relieve a debtor from gaol, should have given rise to a charge against him resembling dishonesty. The quarrel appears to have occurred about the period in question.

Another anecdote partakes more of the ludicrous. A gentleman inquiring whether he was within was shown up to his room without further ceremony, when soon after having entered it, a noise of voices as if in altercation was heard by the people below, the key of the door at the same moment being turned within the room. Doubtful of the nature of the interview, the attention of the landlady for a moment turned toward the apartment of her lodger, but both voices being distinguished at intervals, her suspicions of personal violence were lulled, and no further notice taken. Late in the evening the door was unlocked, a good supper ordered by the visiter from

a neighbouring tavern, and the gentlemen who met so ungraciously at first, spent the remainder of the evening in great good humour. The explanation given of this scene was, that the Poet being behind-hand with certain writings for the press, and the stated period of publication nearly arrived, the intruder who was a printer or publisher, possibly Hamilton or Wilkie for both of whom he wrote at the time, finding them in a backward state, would not quit the room till they were finished; and for this species of durance inflicted upon the author, the supper formed the apology.

In these apartments, little indebted as we may believe to the labours of the housemaid, he is said to have observed the habits and predatory life of the spider, and drawn up that paper on the subject, which appears in the fourth number of the Bee, is reprinted in the Essays, and given in substance in the History of Animated Nature. In his musing moods the confined nature of his abode offered few external objects to contemplate. The necessity for almost constant labour to supply the press made him in some measure a prisoner, and persons so placed have often found interest or amusement in contemplating the lower order of created beings. There is a vacuum in the mind in such situations which something must supply; and when greater objects are wanting, we seize upon the less. The creature, while it instructed him in the habits of its species, offered some

novelty to the readers of his paper (the Bee); and an insignificant circumstance was thus dexterously converted into an amusing communication on a point of natural history.

At this period probably his pen had not attained that rapidity it subsequently acquired; and having early possessed the laudable ambition of writing well rather than quickly, the aim at excellence in the eyes of those who wanted quantity found no great favour; and to this we may in part attribute the visit of the printer to his lodgings, the disconnection with Griffiths, and disagreements possibly with others of his magazine patrons. There will be always room for complaint against him who contracts to furnish a given quantity of mental labour within a given time; circumstances, in spite of even dogged determination to the contrary, continually make him in arrear, and however he may promise punctually and conscientiously mean to fulfil the engagement, he can rarely insure it. The work of the hand alone, is mechanical and therefore certain; that of the mind can scarcely be otherwise than variable. Tracing some of the epochs and circumstances of his life in his writings, his situation now seems exactly and minutely described in a passage put into the mouth of the Vicar of Wakefield's son. The allusions to having made one attempt for fame, meaning the Enquiry into Polite Learning—to his being obliged afterwards to write for bread—to his passion for applause—to his efforts at acquiring an elegant style

—all are so applicable as to admit of no mistake ; and the concluding complaint of the fate of his pieces is in nearly the precise words used in the preface to the Essays on their subsequent republication when embodied into a volume.

“Having a mind too proud” (George Primrose is made to say) “to stoop to such indignities (that of obtaining subscriptions for books not meant to be published), and yet a fortune too humble to hazard a second attempt for fame, I was now obliged to take a middle course, and write for bread. But I was unqualified for a profession where mere industry alone was to insure success. I could not suppress my lurking passion for applause, but usually consumed that time in efforts after excellence which takes up but little room, when it should have been more advantageously employed in the diffusive productions of fruitful mediocrity. My little piece would therefore come forth in the midst of periodical publications, unnoticed and unknown. The public were more importantly employed, than to observe the easy simplicity of my style, or the harmony of my periods. Sheet after sheet was thrown off to oblivion. My essays were buried among essays upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures for the bite of a mad dog ; while Philautos, Philalethes, Philelutheros, and Philanthropos, all wrote better, because they wrote faster than I.”

From the previous notice of his labours in criticism, it would seem that his contributions to

the Critical Review ceased for a time about September 1759.\* The cause appears to have been engagements in three periodical works nearly at the same moment: The Bee, The Busy Body, and the Lady's Magazine; glad perhaps to escape from reviewing to original composition, as a source, if not of greater emolument, at least of probable fame and more agreeable employment.

The Bee, a collection of essays, published weekly by Wilkie, price three-pence, and to which he furnished all the papers of value, appeared on the 6th of October, 1759, with the motto from Lucretius—

“Floriferis ut apes saltibus omnia libant  
Omnia nos itidem.”

It proceeded as far as the eighth number (24th November), and then from the want of that encouragement hinted by the author or publisher in the newspaper†, and which in the fourth number is perhaps injudiciously for the success of the work, however humorously proclaimed, ceased. The papers exhibited no want of variety or of excellence, but there is a fortune in small things as in great.

He is said to have had associates in this undertaking, which however applies with more pro-

\* This is to be understood only of the moment: little doubt exists that he was an occasional contributor to that journal for some years afterward.

† This, and the prospectus of the work, will be found in the first volume of his Works.

bability to the *Lady's Magazine*, issuing at the same moment from the same publisher, and likewise indebted to his pen. If he really received aid, it seems to have been confined to a few selections, such as those already mentioned from the *Literary Magazine* (if these indeed be not reclamations of his own offspring), and three or four short pieces from Voltaire and others. All the leading papers, such as were expected to give character and popularity to the work, bear sufficient testimony to the hand of Goldsmith. They evince all his playful genius, vivacity, and observation on life, are drawn up with some care, and furnish evidence of his having thought attentively on several of the subjects. The paper on education anticipated many of the sentiments of Rousseau; and that on eloquence supplies useful hints to English divines on the oratory of the pulpit, which he justly remarks has not received that attention in our country that it deserves. There are fewer subjects of mere humour than in his subsequent essays.

The discontent jocularly expressed at the cool reception experienced by the *Bee* from the public, was not unreasonable: the pieces rose afterwards in estimation as their author became known by more important works; were copied into numerous contemporary publications; were admired as ingenious and amusing; and had become ere this a source sometimes of reputation, sometimes of profit, to all but their author; adding another



instance to the many, that the world seldom agrees to applaud small things, however well done, except when executed by such as have shown themselves capable of doing greater. To give the work the chance of escape from oblivion, and a less perishable form, the numbers were collected and re-published by the Dodsleys in the middle of December 1759; and several of the best appeared in the volume of Essays printed in 1765.

Anxious as he may be supposed for the success of the paper, it argues no inconsiderable fertility to find him contributing to others. On the 9th of October, three days only after the appearance of the first number of *The Bee*, came out "*The Busy Body*;" a periodical paper, something on the plan though larger in form, of the older essayists, published by Pottinger, price two-pence, and to appear every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. To this Goldsmith contributed (Oct. 13th) the third paper "*On the Clubs of London*," afterwards republished by himself in his *Essays*. Part of the fifth number is likewise his, namely, that poem inserted in his works, and said to be written "in the manner of Swift," called "*The Logicians Refuted*." In order as is supposed to draw attention to the publication as rescuing from obscurity a piece by the Dean of St. Patrick's, it was announced as really his in the newspapers of the day, by the publisher in the following terms, and is inserted by Sir Walter Scott, upon the authority of the Dublin edition, in his collection of Swift's works. His attention was

not drawn to it, as there appears no note or remark on its being considered the property of Goldsmith.

“The following poem,” (says the advertisement) “written by Dean Swift, is communicated to the public by The Busy Body, to whom it was presented by a nobleman of distinguished learning and taste.”

The sixth number, giving an account of the supposed rambles of the Busy Body through London during one of the nights of illumination for our successes in America, is beyond doubt by Goldsmith; it contains not only his sentiments, as seen in other pieces written about the same time, but his manner, his humour, and even his unusual phrases—such as “May this be poison,” which is used in the *Adventures of a Strolling Player*, in the *Citizen of the World*, and in the *Haunch of Venison*; and the same exclamation is made to proceed from a drunken shoemaker, that he afterwards put into the mouth of the soldier, in the *Citizen of the World* when a French invasion was talked of, “What would become of our holy religion!” Even his residence at the moment may be traced; for he begins his ramble, as an inhabitant of Green-Arbour Court would probably do, in Ludgate Hill. The paper forms an example of his readiness and skill to seize and appropriate even a trivial topic for an essay: it was not republished by himself, probably because the subject was of a temporary nature.

In the seventh number, among other contri-

butions, are the stanzas which appear in his poetical works, on the taking of Quebec. On the 3d of November the *Busy Body*, whose existence, like that of the *Bee*, was brief and not brilliant, having only reached the twelfth number, ceased as a distinct work, being then merged in another by a different publisher. Whatever other papers he may have furnished are unknown, nor does internal evidence supply a clue to the discovery.

The motive for engaging in this work, his participation in which has been hitherto unnoticed, was probably to assist Purdon, believed to have been either editor, or one of the contributors: so that, when unable to furnish money to him or to others who made appeals to his friendship, he gave what to literary men formed an equivalent.

The *Lady's Magazine*, brought out by the publisher of the *Bee*, and nearly at the same moment, (1st October, 1759,) formed the third publication to which he contributed. It was said to be the first miscellany expressly appropriated to the fair sex; and on that account probably came introduced as under the management of a female editor, who assumed the name of the Hon. Mrs. Caroline A. Stanhope. The disguise of sex, however, is so thinly preserved as to be penetrated in every page; but it admitted of a flourishing advertisement, which though perhaps too careless to be drawn up by Goldsmith, has something of that antithetical smartness which he sometimes really adopted, and sometimes, as in one of his *Essays* (*Specimens of*

a Magazine in Miniature), made the subject of ridicule.

His share in this work at its commencement is not certainly known, and was probably inconsiderable, although about a year afterwards he appears from concurrent testimonies to have become its editor. Dr. Percy, who during his visits to the Poet when in town had abundant opportunities of knowing the fact, merely states that he conducted the magazine for Wilkie, without referring to the precise time when so employed. Allusion was likewise made to this occupation on occasion of the affray with Evans the bookseller in 1773, and the remark made, however unfounded in fact, that one who as editor of a magazine had made free with the literary reputation of others, had little right to complain of similar liberties being taken with his own. Mr. Thomas English, well known among the literary men of the time, whose name has been mentioned in connexion with the Annual Register, said that Goldsmith, whom he personally knew, furnished the magazine at first with a few poetical pieces only, but that as editor his prose contributions were considerable.

The period at which this connexion took place will be hereafter noticed; but of his early influence in the management there would appear to be traces in the first two numbers, which in a few lines devoted to Irish news, contain notices of petty events near Athlone of no interest and not

likely to be selected from the mass of general intelligence respecting that country excepting by such as were attached to the spot by local ties or recollections. In the first number is an account of a decoy for birds in Lincolnshire, afterwards transcribed into his *Animated Nature*; and the second commences with his story of Alcander and Septimius. The original papers on female life, manners, duties, and character, present something of his vivacity and humour, but, when closely examined, want the turn of thought and the finish which belong to his general style.

Of the poetical pieces attributed to him by Mr. English we have no certain knowledge. Two songs already given from the recollection of Mrs. Lawder, are in the second number; and likewise another production, a rebus, which though then a staple article of ingenuity in the chief magazines of the day, would scarcely be suspected to claim him as its author. It is in praise of Newbery, the bookseller; to whom as will be seen, his obligations were numerous.

“ What we say of a thing which is just come in fashion,  
And that which we do with the dead,  
Is the name of the honestest man in the nation :  
What more of a man can be said ?”

The premature termination of the *Bee*, and *Busy Body*, and disconnexion with the magazine just mentioned, left him at liberty to look round for other literary employment, and very little time was lost in the search. His facility and inge-

nuity as a writer appeared to be well understood by what is called *the trade* ; for two of its most active members immediately engaged him.

One of these was Smollett, who by his numerous speculations and compilations on various subjects, had become so identified with booksellers, as to be intent, only according to his opponents, on the commercial not the literary value of books. He had been the subject of jocular remark even to Goldsmith for this propensity, in a paper of the Bee, in which while Johnson, Hume, and others, are supposed to be seeking seats in a vehicle appropriated to Fame, he is represented as more desirous to enter the stage-coach of riches.\*

The other was the bookseller just mentioned, Mr. John Newbery of St. Paul's Churchyard, known for probity, good sense, and a benevolent disposition, but more popularly for the juvenile volumes supplied in their youth to that generation which has just passed away. He had been brought up to trade at Reading in Berkshire, but changing his occupation and residence, and being an intelligent man with a taste for reading, commenced the business of bookseller in London. Observing the want of a class of books fit to engage and instruct the eager curiosity of children and youth, he set about remedying the defect, partly by entering on the business of author himself, but

\* Bee, No. V. ; Works, vol. i.



chiefly by employing with this view men of considerable talents though little known to fame ; and to these were added for occasional purposes of a higher description, Goldsmith, Christopher Smart, who had married his daughter-in-law, Guthrie, Hugh Kelly, and a few more.

His ingenuity and amiable qualities rendered him soon generally respected. Writers of the first character sought his acquaintance, and in his friendship not unfrequently found occasional alleviation of their most pressing wants. Among these were Dr. Johnson,—a few of whose applications to him for assistance are now, for the first time, made public in the subjoined communications\* ; and similar loans, of which the evidences remain, were rendered to Bonnel Thornton, Guthrie, Mrs. Lennox, David Erskine Baker, Bickerstaffe, and others, whose acknowledgments for tem-

\* “ *To Mr. Newbery.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have just now a demand upon me for more money than I have by me : if you could conveniently help me with two pounds, it will be a favour, to

“ Sir,

“ Your most humble servant,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.

“ April, 15, 1751.”

On the back of this is endorsed the following receipt :—

“ 20th April.—Received of Mr. Newbery the sum of two guineas for the use of Mr. Johnson, p<sup>r</sup> me,

“ THOS. LUCY.”

porary supplies are still in existence; and he became the confidential friend of the celebrated Dr. James, whose medicines he sold, and the property of which continues in his family. It is

*"To Mr. Newbery.*

"SIR,

"I beg the favour of you to send me by the bearer, a guinea, for which I will account to you on some future production

"I am, Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"July 29, 1751."

Endorsed on the back by Thos. Lucy, as in the preceding.

"DEAR SIR,

"August 24. 1751.

"I beg the favour of you to lend me another guinea, for which I shall be glad of any opportunity to account with you, as soon as any proper thing can be thought on, or which I will repay you in a few weeks.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Endorsed as before.

"May 19. 1759.

"I promise to pay to Mr. Newbery the sum of forty-two pounds nineteen shillings and ten pence on demand, value received.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"£42...19...10."

"March 20. 1760.

"I promise to pay to Mr. Newbery, the sum of thirty pounds upon demand.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"£30...0...0."

Another memorandum of Newbery's simply states,—“Lent Mr. Johnson, July 30., £1...1.”

Goldsmith however who, in the "Vicar of Wakefield," has given him a certain immortality. He is introduced and described in that work (chap. xviii.) in connection with an act of benevolence towards the chief personage of the tale, who thus sketches his face and manner in a few words:—"This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, who has written so many little books for children: he called himself their friend; but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted but he was in haste to be gone; for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr. Thomas Trip. I immediately recollected this good-natured man's red-pimpled face."

By Smollett and this gentleman several works had been carried through the press in conjunction; and each had at this moment new, though not rival, speculations in hand. The former announced as editor, the "British Magazine," in which there is reason to believe Newbery had a share; while the latter, as chief proprietor started the "Public Ledger," a daily newspaper still in existence and the original popularity of which was said to be owing to the contributions of Goldsmith. Both undertakings were to commence with the new year, 1760.

This seemed the era of magazines; for in addition to the British, there were announced nearly at the same moment, "The Imperial," "The Public," "The Weekly," and "The Royal Female," Ma-

gazines. "The Lady's Magazine," as we have seen, and "The Royal Magazine" had started into being only a few months previously ; while "The Gentleman's," "The Universal," "The London," "The Grand," and to outdo all in promise and in name, "The Grand Magazine of Magazines," were enjoying all the honours and advantages of confirmed existence. Amid such a host of active competitors for public favour, Smollett probably believed that his undertaking might pass unnoticed unless introduced with all the ceremony due to an author of his established pretensions. The subjoined announcement therefore was made, with a degree of parade which emanating from any other quarter, would have formed a fruitful subject for ridicule to his sarcastic wit\* : but as the record of

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\* "By the King's authority.

"Dr. Smollett having represented to his Majesty that he has been at great labour and expense in writing original pieces himself, and engaging other gentlemen to write original pieces, to be published in the 'British Magazine, or Monthly Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies,' his Majesty was pleased to signify his approbation of the said work by granting his royal licence to the said Dr. Smollett ;"

"And this Day is published, Price 6*d.*,

"Embellished with three curious Copper-plates,

"Number II. of

"THE BRITISH MAGAZINE ;

OR,

"MONTHLY REPOSITORY FOR GENTLEMEN AND

"LADIES.

"By T. SMOLLETT, M.D., and Others.

"Printed for H. PAYNE, at Dryden's Head, in Paternoster Row ;  
and sold by all Booksellers in Great Britain and Ireland ;

"Of whom may be had No. I."

a publication to which he and Goldsmith gave the aid of their talents, it is worthy of being preserved.

The name of the latter as a contributor was not mentioned, no doubt by his own desire; not possibly from being above appearing in the same page even in a periodical work with that of Smollett; but being unknown as having produced any thing of popular interest, he was unwilling to make his first appearance in small things when conscious of powers capable of accomplishing almost the greatest. The knowledge of his aid as an auxiliary was confined to his friends only, or those immediately connected with the work. The first number appeared on the 1st of January, 1760. Of his share in it as distinguished from Smollett, an imperfect knowledge only can now be obtained: internal evidence and subsequent reclamation supply something, but not all. The dedication, in a strain of extreme eulogy to Mr. Pitt, who was then the idol of the nation and considered by his public services almost a personal benefactor of the individuals composing it, is obviously not by Goldsmith. If Smollett were the writer, he changed his politics on the accession of Lord Bute to power the following year by giving the aid of his pen to the support of that nobleman. But at this moment he possessed surer means of giving currency to the magazine than the favour or flattery of any minister whatever;—he had a new novel in hand. In the first number appeared the “Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves;” and

a chapter being given each succeeding month till the conclusion, in December, 1761, a portion of interest was thus kept up for two years ; before which the undertaking became fully established in public favour.

Goldsmith, less interested in the adventure, or less systematically prepared, came to the task with a stock of the then usual magazine wares—Essays, stories, and Oriental tales, a few only of which he republished in the volume of essays already mentioned. Others which were shorter, less finished, or considered of less interest though all bearing traces of his spirit and humour, were left in obscurity to be dug up by the research of future admirers ; and Wright the printer, in the volumes mentioned as edited by Isaac Reed, has rescued many. Among these were several classical criticisms, the style of which admits of no mistake, and were further known to be his by Bishop Percy and Malone ; but there are still a few others to be gleaned by diligent examination : and of such a writer even in his more careless effusions who would willingly lose any thing ?

Smollett, with genius fitted for almost any department of literature, seems never to have aimed at adding the character of essayist to that of historian, novelist, and critic ; nor was the bent of his mind quite fitted for it perhaps by nature. His touch was bold, but frequently coarse ; his personages drawn with something of caricature ; his humour broad ; his wit, descriptions, and incidents,



sometimes licentious and even indecent; his satire shrewd, sarcastic, and often bitter, exhibiting more of the spirit of Juvenal than of Horace, and therefore less likely to be received with favour by the mass of mankind as corrector of their faults and foibles.

Goldsmith, a more indulgent observer of human nature, had also more amenity of mind and manners, and notwithstanding the greater license of language of that day, is rarely betrayed into indelicacy of thought or expression. He appears to draw characters and tell stories more accurately true to life; never exaggerates for the sake of producing effect; his humour unlike Smollett's is chastened, his mirth never boisterous, his raillery playful, and free from that tendency to misanthropic severity not unfrequent in the writings of his coadjutor. He paints the peculiarities of mankind minutely, yet with ease and freedom of hand, as if the task of observing and detailing cost him no effort. With all the tenderness of a fellow-mortal conscious of the operation of human passions and frailties within himself, he was willing to be gentle, yet corrective, in dealing with those of others; and this perhaps forms one of his claims to what Johnson has called him in the Epitaph, "lenis dominator."

In their styles of writing, as in their spirit, some differences likewise appear. Smollett, commonly content with being clear and forcible, aims at no other merit; Goldsmith, in addition to perspicuity,

is almost always elegant yet natural; he seems incapable of throwing off a slovenly sentence; and this not so much from study or correction, for it is never rounded for the sake of effect, as from that natural taste which costs no labour, and is to the great majority of writers unattainable by art. "It may be observed," says Bishop Percy (and the writer can confirm this testimony from what yet remains), "that his elegant and enchanting style in prose flowed from him with so much facility, that in whole quires of his histories, 'Animated Nature,' &c., he had seldom occasion to correct or alter a single word." Smollett is rarely to be tracked through the mazes of periodical literature in the same manner as Goldsmith. He is wanting in the mannerism that belongs frequently to men of genius, and which gives to anonymous writings nearly as much certainty as if their names were affixed to the papers. However great and varied his powers as a writer, this specific character is wanting: he wrote too carelessly and multifariously to preserve strong individuality; we cannot trace his train of thought, his favourite phrases, the turn of his periods, or known sentiments. By these Johnson was often detected when perhaps he had little desire to be known. By these Goldsmith also, is occasionally to be traced by such as are intimately conversant with his writings, particularly when, from his own admission, or the information of others, we know the channels through which they first found their way to the public.

Two other contributors to the Magazine, either at its commencement, or immediately afterwards, are said to have been Mr. Griffith Jones, and Mr. Huddleston Wynne; the former an assistant to Newbery in the arrangement of his little books; the latter known at the time from a variety of works in prose and verse, though not of permanent interest. To these probably belong the inferior essays; to Goldsmith or Smollett those of a more finished description. Still, among a variety of short pieces some necessarily inferior to others, doubts as to their origin will prevail; and all that can be done is, to point out to the attention of the reader such as are probable where certain knowledge cannot now be obtained. But involved as Smollett seems at all times to have been in a multiplicity of literary projects, it may not be wide of the truth to infer that his name, his novel, and some general superintendence, were as much as he could give to a work of this description.

The papers which Goldsmith thought proper to own by reprinting them in one of his volumes, were one in the February number of the Magazine, one in March, one in April, one in June; where likewise appear the lines from the Bee, "On a Beautiful Child struck Blind by Lightning," which are here represented to be on one who had been deprived of sight by the small-pox; and one in October. These are such as he considered most finished, and not unworthy of the author of the "Traveller," which poem this volume in its period

of publication immediately succeeded, and with which he probably thought it would be contrasted.

Others of undoubted authenticity, though deemed by him of less interest for the purpose then in view, were early known to be his ; one if not two in January, one in February, one in April, one in an extra number of the Magazine to which no month is prefixed, but seemingly published between April and May ; one if not two in May ; one in June, four in July, one in August, and one in September ; all of which will find place in his works. The doubtful papers are about seven or eight in number ; one of these in January, "On the Bravery of the English Common Soldiers," appears in the works of Dr. Johnson ; and although perhaps properly placed there, its history may deserve inquiry from some incorrect statements which have appeared.

Boswell informs us that it was added to the "Idler" by Dr. Johnson, when first collected into volumes ; but in this he errs ; for it was neither added by him, nor is it to be found in the early editions of that work ; and for all that appears, may have been included afterwards without sufficient inquiry. So great was the reputation of that eminent writer, that any original paper from him would have been announced with every degree of publicity and triumph, as were those simply *reprinted* from other sources. Thus, in the same number of the Magazine, the 89th paper of the "Idler," then in course of publication, is republished with the

following introductory remark :—" The reader, we imagine, will not be displeased to learn, that we propose to enrich every number of the *British Magazine* with one paper from the ' *Idler*,' by permission of the author, whose great genius and extensive learning may be justly numbered among the most shining ornaments of the present age." Other reasons for questioning its origin in consequence of this ambiguity appear in the allusions, several of which may be found in other parts of the writings of Goldsmith : he further pursued the subject in the *Magazine* for June—the " *Distresses of a Common Soldier*," reprinted in the " *Citizen of the World*," and again in the volume of essays in 1765 ; a paper which has been much praised by French critics as breathing the spirit of an humble optimist. It would appear, therefore, that Boswell was unacquainted with the previous publication of the essay in this *Magazine* ; and likewise that Smollett, or whoever officiated as editor, knew not or considered it not to be written by Johnson, or they would have proclaimed the honour for the credit of their work.

Among the supposed contributions of Goldsmith, but less certain from being less finished, is a tale where we find something like the first rude germ of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. The catastrophe is indeed unnatural and abrupt, obviously hurried to a conclusion, and written probably when the press required an immediate supply of matter. But looking to the scene, which is laid in the north

of England; the hero, a clergyman; his hospitality; his character and peculiarities, "sitting by the way-side to welcome the passing stranger," and replying to their news by some parallel instance from antiquity, or anecdote of his youth; circumstances so much in the spirit and manner of the novel, and of the *Deserted Village*; his love for his daughter; her seduction; the character and description of the seducer, for whom he finds the Irish name of Dawson; the grief of the agonised father, first shown in threats, and then the recollection that his sacred calling precluded him having recourse to violence to resent the injury; added to minute circumstances, which strike the attentive reader; all render it probable that this formed the first draught of a tale which we have hitherto known only in its perfect state. It is called the "*History of Miss Stanton.*"

For several months he ceased to render further assistance in consequence of becoming, by his own account afterwards, editor of the *Lady's Magazine*. But this connexion being either of short continuance, or having time on his hands for the purpose, and deeming the *British Magazine* a more suitable medium for pursuing such a subject, he commenced in that work in July 1761 a series of papers on the *Belles Lettres*, embracing a considerable portion of classical criticism. These were continued, with the exception of the months of November 1761, and July, August, October, and December 1762 (when it will be seen he was other-



wise employed), until January, 1763. They then terminated, abruptly it would seem, for the last communication bears the usual intimation, *To be continued*. Fourteen papers altogether were given, each forming about three pages of the Magazine, printed in double columns; and attention was either drawn to them, or the proprietors were willing to do so, by a passage in the preface to the volume for 1762, where it is stated as if much consideration were due to the subject or the writer, that besides four articles continued uninterruptedly through the work, they have “added a fifth on the subject of the Belles Lettres, which we flatter ourselves will meet with peculiar approbation.” The last essay of a miscellaneous nature communicated by him was “Proposal for augmenting the Forces of Great Britain,” strongly marked with his characteristic humour, which appeared in January 1762.

The contributions alluded to by the proprietors in the above passage as creditable to their miscellany and an additional claim on the patronage of the public, were in biography, natural history, and the histories of France and Canada. With the greater part, or probably the whole of these, Goldsmith had no concern: the historical articles indeed commencing with the first number, by a coincidence no doubt accidental, ceased about the same time (March, 1763) as his communications, and with equal abruptness; for they are noted, “To be continued.” The narration is not without merit, but wants the terseness, vigour, and spirit of philoso-

phical reflection common to his other histories ; qualities which tended so largely to enhance their popularity. Neither are they likely to have been by Smollett, who still, if we are to believe the advertisements, retained his connexion with the Magazine. One or both may indeed have been rough-drawn under his direction by an inferior workman ; a conjecture which receives countenance from the fact of being discontinued shortly before the state of his health rendered it necessary to quit England for the Continent, in June 1763.

Connected with the history of this Magazine ere it became generally known, a paper which appeared in the Public Ledger must not be forgotten. Publications, like men, require the most active friends in the earlier stages of their being ; for it is then, when in a state of obscurity that introduction becomes kind and publicity useful ; when known, this kind of assistance becomes no longer necessary. What in the latter case would appear unbecoming praise, is in the former but a recommendation to the good opinion of the world. To introduce the work in the best manner to public favour, Goldsmith, whose skill seems to have been perfectly appreciated by such as knew him, was applied to. He could do for Smollett's undertaking what the latter without a violation of modesty could not do for himself—praise his talents with all the warmth of an admirer. A very skilful notice was therefore introduced in the form of an amusing letter bearing date February 16th, 1760, which for its humour,

will be perused with pleasure. It is entitled, "A Description of a Wow Wow in the Country," and will be given in another place. Here, it may be remarked as a peculiarity in all his communications, that he scarcely ever uses a distinguishing signature: for however they may be couched in the epistolary form, there is, with one or two exceptions only, no name affixed even when a name might be supposed to add to the humour of the object.

## CHAP. X.

PUBLIC LEDGER.—CHINESE LETTERS.—LADY'S MAGAZINE.—  
 REMOVES TO WINE-OFFICE COURT.—DR. JOHNSON.—GAR-  
 RICK.—INTRODUCTION TO HISTORY OF THE WAR.—PRO-  
 JECT FOR VISITING ASIA.

**H**is engagement with Newbery in the newspaper, as already remarked, was nearly simultaneous with that in the Magazine, the difference of time being more than a few days ; but as the latter by coming out on the 1st of January had the priority, his connexion with it has been first noticed. To the former, however, he contributed more largely ; and the papers so furnished have proved one of the sources of his fame.

The first number of the Public Ledger appeared on the 12th of January 1760 ; introduced by a long and laboured prospectus which formed the leading article for many days. In addition to original news, it was to concentrate facts from contemporary journals ; to be a medium of communication on all matters of commerce or business ; to give original papers on literature ; “ supply information to the industrious, and amusement to the idle ;” in a word, to combine in the usual flourishing strain of applicants for public favour, matters incompatible, and put forth promises rarely fulfilled, and which none has more happily ridiculed than Gold-

smith, who had some experience in similar propitiatory addresses, in one of his Essays. On this occasion judging from internal evidence he seems not to have been employed. Newbery, however, anxious for the success of the undertaking, probably thought it more the affair of a man of business than of genius; he therefore either wrote it himself or entrusted it to his editor, who is said to have been Mr. Griffith Jones, already mentioned as connected afterwards with the *British Magazine*. It is well drawn up, but wants the more marked characteristics of the author of the "*Citizen of the World*."

The agreement was to furnish papers of an amusing character twice a week, for which according to contemporary statements, he was to receive a salary of 100*l.* per annum; and this being at the rate of something less than a guinea each, is probably true. It is a curious coincidence, that Dr. Johnson should have been employed by the same publisher to contribute papers of a similar description to the "*Universal Chronicle*," a weekly newspaper commenced by him in April, 1758, in which the "*Idler*," still at that moment in course of publication, first appeared; and no stronger testimony can be given of the opinion formed of the talents of Goldsmith at this period however little known to the world, than his being chosen the

\* For writing the "*Idler*," Johnson is said to have received a share of the profits of the paper. When first collected into volumes, two thirds of the profits were given to him, as appears

prop of one newspaper as the greatest writer of the age had been of another.

He appears either not to have had, or not to have matured, a systematic form for his contributions on their commencement. Two miscellaneous papers precede the first of the Chinese letters; one on the 17th of January five days after the first publication of the newspaper; the other on the 19th; both possessing all his characteristic manner, and much of his humour; and which like so many of his fugitive pieces have been hitherto unnoticed. In the one he animadverts on a supposed peculiarity of our countrymen, that of unmeasured abuse of the public enemy during war; a failing which his natural benevolence of disposition, and some of that regard for the better qualities of the French character exhibited in the "Traveller," led him now and in other passages of his writings, in the sixth number of the "Busy Body," for instance, to censure as unbecoming in generous opponents. Having thus lectured the men, the other paper contains

by the following account, copied from the original, rendered by Newbery, which will interest the literary reader:—

"The Idler.

"Dr.				Cr.			
£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	
Paid for advertising	20	0	6	1500 Sets at	£	s.	d.
Printing 2 vols. 1500	41	13	0	£16 per 100	240	0	0
Paper - - - -	52	3	0				
	113	16	6	Dr. Johnson	84	2	4
Profit on the Edition	126	3	6	$\frac{2}{3}$ ds			
				Mr. Newbery	42	1	2
				$\frac{1}{3}$ d			
	£240	0	0				
					£126	3	6"



a humorous attack upon the supposed foibles of the fair sex, in a letter from the "Goddess of Silence to the Ladies of London and Westminster greeting." Both papers will be found in the Works.

Miscellaneous papers however give no distinct character to the writer, because general readers seldom know them to proceed from the same pen. A distinguishing title or subject preserves identity, and fixes a stronger hold upon the imagination of those we would win or influence: we seem then in the nature of acquaintance; we meet and part with the hope if agreeable of meeting again; and a series of papers so noted will be read with more interest than without such clue to guide us to the author. The "Spectator," published among other essays without appropriating a specific name, would not have been so attractive as with it.

A plan being matured, he assumed the character of a Chinese philosopher, who in travelling to Europe from the laudable motive of examining mankind at large, and acquiring wisdom by experience, had fixed his residence for a time in England, and aimed at describing the manners of its people. The idea was not new: the Turkish Spy, and the Persian and Peruvian Letters; and similar productions, had sought and secured much public attention in France. Swift had formed some such design, though not wholly the same, from the greater rudeness of the people who were to be introduced as giving the fruits of their observation, in making

the Indian chiefs who were in London during the reign of Queen Anne tell the story of their travels ; a project which by communicating to Steele, the latter marred by a paper or two in the "Tatler" and "Spectator."\*

Works of this kind when executed with tolerable spirit and skill, insure considerable popularity in almost all countries. Human nature is pleased to see images of itself multiplied ; and nations no less than individuals like to be pourtrayed when the portrait is drawn with a certain portion of good-nature. Vanity may have something to do with this feeling, yet it is not without utility. We are desirous to know what others think, and even what fictitious characters may be supposed to think, of our conduct and habits ; a species of mental mirror is thus held up to general view, reflecting back faults and follies that from their familiarity pass unnoticed, or pass with less of reproof than they deserve, but which by being paraded before us are in time corrected. Even peculiarities which are objectionable yet possess no portion of positive evil often become by being pointed out divested

\* He writes to Stella, April 28, 1711,—"The 'Spectator' is written by Steele, with Addison's help ; 'tis often very pretty. Yesterday it was made of a noble hint I gave him long ago for his Tatlers, about an Indian supposed to write his travels into England. I repent he ever had it: I intended to have written a book on that subject. I believe he has spent it all in one paper, and all the under hints there are mine too." This paper, however, is marked as Addison's, to whom Steele no doubt communicated it.

of their more disagreeable features ; and when this kind of *weeding* is diligently exercised, foreigners are left without excuse for overlooking in accidental variations of manners the virtues of a rival nation.

It may gratify curiosity to know that his first design according to accounts of his friends was to make his hero a native of Morocco or Fez ; but, reflecting on the rude nature of the people of Barbary, this idea was dropped. A Chinese was then chosen as offering more novelty of character than a Turk or Persian ; and being equally advanced in the scale of civilization, could pass an opinion on all he saw better than the native of a more barbarous country. From a passage in one of his letters to Bryanton in a foregoing page, it seems certain that Goldsmith viewed that people with considerable interest. China, by its distance, its reputed antiquity, its disinclination to receive or to visit strangers, its arts, its science and general knowledge however imperfect, and the long submission of its people to an exclusive and jealous policy of the governing power, has always been an object of curiosity to the nations of Europe. Du Halde's history had rather increased than diminished this feeling : the novelty of that work had not yet passed away among the learned, though from its voluminous nature the contents continued in a great degree unknown to the body of general readers. An opportunity therefore offered, while commenting upon English habits

and opinions, to introduce allusions to those of a people who claiming for themselves the highest degree of civilisation, by stigmatising all Europeans as barbarians, yet exhibit many traces of imperfect advancement of mind.

The first number of the letters, including the short introductory one, appeared on the 24th January, 1760; the second on the 29th; the third on the 31st. In the month of February there were ten letters, in March ten, in April eight, in May ten, in June eleven, in July eight, in August nine, in September ten, in October ten, in November six, and in December three: making together ninety-eight letters within the year although marked in the newspaper ninety-seven; an error arising from the number twenty-five being twice used in continuing the same subject. These with the three papers already quoted, give nearly his stated proportion, from the 12th of January, of two each week. But there is little doubt that he furnished others, though possibly less finished and therefore more difficult to trace; such as on the encouragement of Opera Singers and Operas (Sept. 16th), and on the Institution of Amateur Concerts for the benefit of the Poor, November 3d. Several of his papers from the British Magazine were likewise transferred to the columns of the Ledger, in return for many of the Chinese Letters being embodied in the pages of the former.

The success of his labours imparted the first assurance of that literary reputation we have seen

him adverting to in just and ardently hoping in earnest; an enlarged circulation according to all contemporary testimony was thus insured to the journal in which they appeared, and the foundation laid for its permanency; for among innumerable candidates for public favour it still continues to be one. The lucubrations of the Chinese Philosopher were generally read, admired, and reprinted: they regularly formed after the third or fourth number the first article in the newspaper, one of the evidences of popularity and merit; they became also what was perhaps very flattering though not very profitable to the writer, a mine which the periodical publications of the day thought themselves at liberty freely to work and appropriate.

Viewed as a production of genius, it is not necessary to characterise what has long taken its stand among the list of English Classics. Our manners, peculiarities, and character, are sketched by a discriminating but not unfriendly hand; we find in all its essential features English life; not of the higher, nor always even of the middling class, but furnishing a familiar view of that mass emphatically termed the people. If his delineations be occasionally homely, there is in them, at least, truth and distinctness, nature, vigour, and observation. Writing not as a moral essayist, and less as a reasoner than a describer, his topics even when not new present an air of novelty; for a very unnecessary apprehension seems always to have influenced him which appears in many of his remarks, of his papers being thought

too grave, or what he considered nearly synonymous with seriousness, dull. He aims therefore to be on whatever topic he touches almost always sprightly, always ready with an anecdote to tell or a character to describe illustrative of his remarks or argument; his humour flows without effort; his wit without a tinge of ill-nature; and even folly is treated with a forbearance and good humour which her errors do not always receive at the hands of wisdom. The character of Beau Tibbs is remembered by every reader of the work: frivolous and self-important, impudent yet good humoured, a pretender to fashion although utterly obscure, meeting the exposures to which this pretension subjects him with complacency or ready excuse, and assuming the airs of wealth when possessing scarcely the common comforts of life,—he forms an amusing specimen of a class sometimes found in a great metropolis. The original is said to have been a person named Thornton, one of his acquaintance, and once in the army: the humour is so happy and the sketch so well given that we are willing perhaps to believe it from the life, heightened in some degree but essentially true in its leading features. It will remind the reader of the familiar acquaintance described in the Haunch of Venison.

The objections urged against the Letters were such as criticism is fond of displaying, yet conscious they are scarcely just: the sentiments and observations were not considered appropriate to the



assumed writer; the mask was supposed to fall off too often, and we discovered not a foreigner but a native. Books of this kind however are understood to be works not of fact but of fiction; not travels to instruct but essays to amuse: every reader who takes them up knows that they were not written, and could not well be written, by a Chinese, and that were such even possible the descriptions would be neither so correct nor amusing as they are. As in the case of theatrical representation, we are not deceived by what is passing before us, or the deception exists but for an instant. All that we really require at the hands of either is the pleasure derived from good imitation, and when this is sufficiently natural, amusing and vigorous, the purpose is answered. That the Poet thought the objection frivolous may be inferred from what seems to be meant for a sneering reply to correspondents of this class: it is prefixed to the thirty-second letter in the newspaper (May 2d): "The editor on this and every other occasion has endeavoured to translate the letter writer in such a manner as he himself, had he understood English, would have written. The reader is requested also to impute all the nonsense and dulness he may happen to find in this and every other letter to *errors of the press.*"

Towards the end of the year they ceased to appear so frequently, partly from the design being nearly completed, partly perhaps from the author resuming his connection, either as editor or contributor,

with the Lady's Magazine. Several pieces in the latter work at this time bear traces of his manner; and selections from such as he had published through other channels were freely reprinted. In the number for November, 1760, we find, exclusive of what may be considered original contributions, one of the Chinese letters; in December another, besides a paper on popular preaching afterwards republished in his Essays; in January a Chinese letter; and in February, to spare himself perhaps the trouble of original composition, he commenced giving the life of Voltaire, already mentioned, which thence continued the first article in every month till its conclusion in November, 1761. The number for April is almost all from his writings; we have for the first article a portion of Voltaire's memoir, a paper from the Bee on the dress of the English ladies; a Chinese letter; Zemin and Galhinda, an eastern tale, the authorship of which is pretty certain; besides thoughts on the English poets from the Literary Magazine; and others less certain, though probable.

How long he continued to superintend the work if really conducted by him is uncertain, but probably till the conclusion of the sketch of Voltaire. His own labours which may pretty well be traced to about that period, consist of letters and essays on female education, manners, and general conduct: they exhibit humour and playfulness, closeness of observation, and knowledge of human nature; the admonitions are in good taste, incul-

cated less by formal precept than through the medium of anecdote or story ; with a just estimate of the feelings, understanding, and accomplishments of those whom he addressed, he shows becoming tenderness towards their foibles. The Magazine seems to have had great success : an advertisement in August 1762, stating that in three years above 120,000 numbers, or more than three thousand three hundred per month had been sold.

During the years 1760–61, his writings were forcing their way into notice when his name continued nearly unknown. We trace the general sense entertained of their merit in the fact, that in turning over the pages of the periodical works of the day, scarcely one is to be found without several of his papers re-printed from other sources ; so that without minute and careful inquiry it is difficult to trace the precise channel through which several of his papers were first introduced to public notice. Even when there were but few in a series, as in the *Busy Body*, these literary freebooters had the sagacity to perceive, and the assurance to select for their own advantage what they discovered to contribute most powerfully to public amusement. Commonly the obligation was not only not acknowledged, but besides being for the moment deprived of the honours of originality, the popularity of his past labours were occasionally made to counterbalance the weight of those that occupied him at the moment. The

Imperial Magazine, for instance, which started in January 1760, at the same time and in rivalry with the British in which he was engaged, contained in its first number two of his papers from the Bee as original articles; he had thus to contend in the race for public favour not only with the genius of others, but with his own. As in the case of certain outlaws in society, his progeny were seized upon wherever found; not indeed to be punished for their demerits, but to be exhibited for our applause.

It was the knowledge of the degree of esteem awarded to his merit that drew from Dr. Johnson, who seems to have known more of his labours than most others of his contemporaries, frequent encomiums on one of the modes of composition in which he excelled. "I was dining," said Dr. Farr, who frequently told the anecdote, "at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, August 7th, 1773, where, amongst other company, were the Archbishop of Tuam and Mr. (now Lord) Eliot, when the latter, making use of some sarcastical reflections on Goldsmith, Johnson broke out warmly in his defence, and in the course of a spirited eulogium said, 'Is there a man, Sir, now who can pen an essay with such ease and elegance as Goldsmith?' "

The possession of a more liberal income arising from the connexion with the Public Ledger, produced corresponding improvement in his situation. About the middle of the year 1760, he left Green Arbour Court, or Square, as it was once termed,

for respectable lodgings in Wine-Office Court, Fleet Street, where for about two years he remained with an acquaintance or relative of the friendly bookseller, Newbery. Here he was often visited by Dr. Percy during his excursions to London, who occasionally told anecdotes of him at this time in conversation which he omitted to introduce into the memoir. One of these related to a foreign artist, a sculptor, whom the Poet had known slightly abroad, and paid as much attention to in London as his time and means permitted. Goldsmith thought he had been fortunate in the execution of two or three busts, and very elegantly and happily told him, "Sir, you live by the dead, and the dead live by you."

Here likewise if traditional notices by other old associates are to be trusted, he acquired a pretty numerous acquaintance of the literary class: some no doubt men of genius; others of that laborious yet unsuccessful order, who after spending their lives in the drudgery of literature, quit the world without leaving behind them a trace of their occupation that is either read or remembered;—a species of borderers upon Parnassus who beat diligently around its base, but want vigour or ingenuity to reach its summit.

Among the former, were Christopher Smart, Guthrie, the Rev. Mr. Francklin, a coadjutor in the *Critical Review* and translator of Sophocles, Murphy, Bickerstaffe, and others. Of inferior powers, were Woty, a poet now forgotten; the Rev. William

Ryder, under-master in St. Paul's School, and author of a variety of works, a History of England, a Family Bible, Translations of Voltaire, and afterwards editor of a Lady's Magazine; Collyer, known by some compilations, and a few translations from the German; Griffiths and Giles Jones; Huddleston Wynne, who besides other things now forgotten, among which were some poems, was author of a History of Ireland, said to have been undertaken at the recommendation of Goldsmith. In a class still lower, yet not deficient in talents or scholarship had their conduct been directed by morals and industry, were Hiffernan, Purdon, Pilkington, and others, of whom scarce even the names are remembered. Most of these were without money, and some without principle; and as Goldsmith was social in his habits, easy of access, and known to be generous when he had any thing to give, he became sometimes the convenience of one class, and the prey of another. Of his unwillingness to refuse any request however unreasonable, the following anecdote told by himself some years afterwards with considerable humour, is a characteristic instance.

Pilkington, son of the Rev. Matthew and Mrs. Letitia Pilkington of Dublin, unhappily known by their quarrels and writings, being thrown upon the world by the disunion of his parents, found refuge in the house of an uncle a physician at Cork. Inheriting the eccentricities of his relatives, for the uncle was not free from them, he



was discarded thence for misconduct ; and having been brought up partly to music, joined Pockrich, another extraordinary character of Ireland, who, having wholly dissipated according to report, a fortune of four thousand pounds per annum, earned a livelihood afterwards by precarious means, particularly some skill in playing on the musical glasses. He died not less strangely than he lived, having lost his life in a fire in Cornhill on the night of one of his principal performances. Pilkington, after the loss of his employer or coadjutor, subsisted by any device that promised to raise money. He was at this time employed in writing his life, which was soon afterwards published in two volumes : their contents and the equivocal fame of his mother as exhibited in her own memoirs and who had died a few years before, gave them some notice and circulation. In Dublin, probably at college, for there was a Pilkington there in 1748, he is said to have first known Goldsmith ; or as a fellow countryman engaged like himself in the service of literature, he found ready admittance to him in London. He had already under various pretences, levied small contributions on the purse of his acquaintance, but on another occasion when no common plea promised to be successful, a new and ingenious one was adopted.

Calling upon the unsuspecting poet in 1760, he gave vent to many regrets that the immediate want of a small sum prevented the prospect of a rich return. Upon inquiry of the circumstances,

he said that a lady of the first rank (the name of the Duchess of Manchester or of Portland was mentioned), being well known for her attachment to curious animals, and the large prices given for the indulgence of this taste, a friend in India desirous to serve him had sent home two white mice, then on board a ship in the river, which were to be offered to her Grace. He had apprised her of their arrival and she expressed impatience to see the animals, but unfortunately he had neither an appropriate cage for their reception, nor clothes fit to appear in before a lady of rank : two guineas would accomplish both objects, but where, alas! were two guineas to be procured? Goldsmith, with great sincerity replied that he possessed only half a guinea and that sum necessarily could be of no use ; the opening however was too favourable and the applicant too dexterous, to permit his attempt to be thus parried. He begged to suggest with much diffidence and deference,—the emergency was pressing and might form some apology for the liberty,—that the money might be raised from a neighbouring pawnbroker by the deposit of his friend's watch ;—the inconvenience could not be great, and at most of only a few hours' continuance : it would rescue a sincere friend from enthrallment, and confer an eternal obligation. The mode of appeal proved irresistible : the money was raised in the manner pointed out, but neither watch nor white mice were afterwards heard of, nor even Mr. Pilkington himself

until a lapse of several months, when a paragraph in the Ledger informed the world that he, giving his name nearly at full length, was endeavouring to raise money in a more equivocal manner.

It is the province of ingenuity to turn even misfortunes to advantage. The whim, or supposed whim, of the lady whose name was used on this occasion furnished the sufferer with what he was frequently on the watch for, a hint for an essay; and it soon appeared in the whimsical story of Prince Bonbennin and the White Mouse, forming numbers forty-eight and forty-nine of Chinese Letters. The loss of a watch thus gave origin to a tale the moral of which as if peculiarly worthy of notice he emphatically marks in italics at its conclusion: "That they who place their affections on trifles at first for amusement, will find those trifles at last become their most serious concern."

To glean hints from every quarter where the character, manners, and amusements of a people are displayed, is a necessary part of the business of him who describes them. Scenes of humbler life were therefore not neglected, for there in fact, national peculiarities are best seen. An anecdote connected with a scene of familiar and popular recreation which he is known often to have visited was told by Kenrick, by whom it was supposed to have been communicated with some variation of circumstances to the Ledger\*, where it was certain to meet the eye of Goldsmith. The authority is

\* June 11, 1760.

indeed apocryphal ; we may therefore rather believe it true from the alleged ludicrous embarrassment in which he was found being characteristic of his ready though inconsiderate generosity.

When strolling in the gardens of White Conduit House, he met with three females of the family of a respectable tradesman, whom for some favour received in the way of his occupation, he invited without hesitation to take tea. The repast passed off with great hilarity, but when the time of payment arrived, he found to his infinite mortification he had not sufficient money for the purpose. To add to the annoyance occasioned by this discovery, some acquaintances in whose eyes he wished to stand particularly well, came up, discovered his perplexity by a remark of the waiter, and willing to enjoy it, professed at first their inability to relieve him ; nor was it till after much amusement had been enjoyed at his expense that the debt was discharged.

Another story of the same period, and coming from the same quarter, is to be received with similar caution. Having joined a few brother authors and others in a white-bait dinner, as favourite an entertainment then as at present, at Blackwall, the conversation after a time became literary, when Goldsmith took the opportunity of inveighing severely, as he had done in the *Chinese Letters*, against what he termed the class of pert and obscene novels, instancing the success of *Tristram Shandy* as derogatory to public taste. The cause

of Sterne was taken up by others ; several of the company joined in the argument, which at length, among these volunteer allies, became warm ; from warmth they proceeded under the influence of wine to personalities, and at length to violence, until the feast terminated in a general fight, when a mob being drawn around the house, the occurrence, though not the names of the combatants, found its way into the newspapers. Goldsmith, the innocent cause of the affray, and whose disposition does not appear to have been pugnacious, is believed not to have been a sufferer on this occasion ; the reputation of it, however, formed sufficient foundation for a sarcasm. And to this Johnson probably alluded when in the scuffle of the former, some years afterwards, with Evans the publisher, Boswell observed that it was a new adventure for Goldsmith to be engaged in,—“ Why, Sir, I believe it is the first time he has *beat* ; he may have been *beaten* before. This, Sir, is a new pleasure to him.”

Of all his acquaintance, this extraordinary man—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—was the one most sedulously cultivated, and the most prized, as he deserved to be for powers of a varied and gigantic order ; who in return saw in Goldsmith much goodness as a man, and great talents, to which he has borne ample testimony, as a writer. They took to each other (to use Johnson’s phrase) with mutual good will ; and nothing of more moment than casual ebullitions of temper in the heat of

occasional argument occurred to interrupt it. Goldsmith, with a keen insight into character, could not but feel that respect which all who associated with Johnson were obliged to pay him, either from their admiration or their fears. He saw in the great moralist, to use his own words in the dedication of his play, "the greatest wit joined with the greatest piety;" from such a person, who was nearly twenty years his senior, he could take a sharp rebuke or biting sarcasm (and who of all his friends escaped them?) without those feelings of resentment occasionally exhibited by inferior men. General opinion had long and justly stamped him the first literary character of the age; it was natural therefore, for one who pursued literature as a profession to deem his acquaintance an advantage as well as an honour. From his experience and critical taste, it was scarcely possible not to profit; and by the respect which great talents combined with good morals ever command in society, he felt that the friendship of one who stood pre-eminent in both formed of itself a passport to some degree of reputation.

There was another motive perhaps in seeking his intimacy; superior minds feel a noble spirit of emulation in the society of each other. Greatness indeed does not always produce greatness in the character of its associates; yet the near contemplation of excellence is not without its effect even on ordinary minds: we are prone to imitate what



is placed before us, and by observation may gain similar advantages from the association with high moral or intellectual qualities, that manners derive from mingling in what is called good society. Eminent men too, it has been said, usually live in clusters, in particular ages, and commonly in communion or friendly intercourse : passion or prejudice, or rivalry, springing from the various contingencies of life, may disunite individuals, in such a body ; but the majority, as they understand the value of each other, are not often influenced by such antipathies. Few things could be more gratifying than to witness in social intercourse, that assemblage of talent of which Johnson and Goldsmith were among the prominent members.

Until about the period at which we are now arrived, it appears they were personally unacquainted. The fame of Johnson had been long established, and found an echo in every society ; the merits of Goldsmith were only whispered through the medium of mutual friends, yet so warmly as to produce the wished-for acquaintance. He had shown himself not unworthy of the favour, by the terms in which the great moralist was mentioned in the *Reverie* in the fifth number of the *Bee*, and again in *Chinese Letters*, where speaking in his assumed eastern character, we are told, “ their Johnsons and Smolletts are truly poets, though for aught I know they never made a single verse in their whole lives.”

Their first meeting, according to the remem-

brance of Bishop Percy, took place on the 31st of May 1761, when Goldsmith gave a supper to a large company, chiefly literary men, at his lodgings in Wine-Office Court. Johnson among others was invited, and Percy as their mutual friend was requested to accompany him. As they proceeded thither the latter had his attention drawn to the studied neatness of the critic's dress, far exceeding what he usually displayed. "He had on," said the Bishop in telling the story, "a new suit of clothes, a new wig nicely powdered, and every thing so dissimilar from his usual habits, that I could not resist the impulse of inquiring the cause of such rigid regard in him to exterior appearance." "Why, Sir," said he with characteristic shrewdness, and willing to play the instructor as well by example as by precept, "I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example.

From this time their intimacy increased until severed by that which terminates all human connexions. The lesson meant to be enforced by the improved garb of his new friend was not lost upon Goldsmith, if he were really open to the charge of personal negligence. Soon after this it will appear from the bills of his landlady, and the account books from 1762 to 1774, of his tailor\*, "honest

\* Communicated to the writer by Mr. John Filby his son, a respectable member of the corporation of London. Some of the items will be hereafter given.

John (he should have said William) Filby," as he called him, whose name transpires in the amusing anecdote told by Boswell respecting the peach-coloured coat, that there was no want of clean linen, or of wearing apparel; and that in the latter he became ultimately expensive if not extravagant.

With Garrick his first meeting, it can scarcely be called acquaintance, appears to have been of a less friendly character: and took place if we are to believe Davies the biographer of the actor, and well acquainted with both, in the previous year, 1760, by an effort to secure some permanent means of support. A vacancy having occurred in the secretaryship of the Society of Arts which Goldsmith wished to obtain, he applied to the manager for his influence, which was represented to be considerable among the members. The latter urged in answer, that Dr. Goldsmith having thought proper in one of his books to attack his management of the theatre, there could exist no fair claim to his good offices were there even no other candidate in the way. Instead of offering an apology, the Poet very bluntly observed that he had indulged in no personal reflections, and still thought he had only spoken the truth; they parted, however, in civility; and the election was carried by a large majority in favour of Dr. Chamberlayne.

This story may be correct in substance though not in detail. Davies, from his theatrical con-

nexions and a variety of transactions with the Poet as a bookseller, possessed abundant opportunities of gaining the necessary information, but forgot or misapprehended what he had heard. It was not Dr. Chamberlayne who was elected in 1760, but Dr. Templeman; and in 1769 Mr. More succeeded to the same appointment; on neither of which occasions does Goldsmith's name appear as candidate, although others are mentioned, and the numbers of votes which each received. Neither does it appear that in his remarks on the conduct of the theatre in the work in question\*, any manager is mentioned by name, or so pointedly by inference, as to give cause of personal offence; his remarks are general, though very little in the way of censure was sufficient to alarm the sensitive character of Garrick. The result of the interview showing him probably how little chance existed of success, the design was at once relinquished without proceeding to the vote; and this accounts for his name not appearing in the minutes on this occasion. He took much interest however in the Society, attended its proceedings very regularly for some years, and contrived as it appears on more than one occasion to pay his subscription by drawing upon his bookseller in advance. Among Newbery's papers are three memorandums of this kind; two in pencil, one dated April 30th, 1765, the others without dates:

\* Enquiry into Polite Learning, Works, vol. i.

—“Lent Dr. Goldsmith, at the Society of Arts, and to pay arrears, 3*l.* 3*s.*”

The success of our arms in the war then carrying on against France, formed a topic too exciting with the nation to be neglected by the booksellers; and several histories of the contest, of various shades of merit, appeared. To one of these he wrote a preface and also an introductory view of several of the chief states of Europe, mentioned in a preceding page with the memorandum prefixed to it of Isaac Reed; whether he took part in the compilation himself, or whether even it was actually published, a diligent search has failed to discover. It was written in 1761, and as appears by the context, previous to the rupture with Spain, the declaration of war against that country appearing in January 1762. A work of this nature had issued in February 1761\*, from a publisher (Owen) for whom he had written one or more other prefaces; his skill in this class of composition being early disco-

\* “This day is published, neatly printed in one large volume, 8vo., price in boards 5*s.* 6*d.*, A Complete History of the present War, from its Commencement in the Year 1756 to the End of the Campaign in 1760; in which all the Battles, Sieges, Sea-engagements, &c. are faithfully related; with Historical and Military Remarks. Printed for L. Davis and C. Reymers in Holborn; W. Owen at Temple Bar; and J. Scott in Paternoster Row.” Books of this description, as they are not now to be found in the regular marts for literature, can only be met with by chance on the stalls; so that whether the preface in question be prefixed to it or to any other of a similar kind has not been determined.

vered and frequently called into requisition. It appears likewise by a receipt from an agent of Guthrie, who was probably the compiler of the body of the work, dated February 2d, 1762, that three guineas on account were paid him by Newbery for a "History of the War:" the book was a partnership affair, and therefore may have been the same.

The manuscript in his own handwriting and now before the writer, occupies nearly forty foolscap pages, closely written; eight being devoted to the preface, and the remainder to succinct notices of the political history, relations, and views of England, France, Prussia, Germany, and Holland: they contain many just and ingenious observations, and exemplify not merely the ease and flow of style, but the clearness of mind which he brought to the subject. Errors and inadvertencies, omissions of names or dates, circumstances mis-stated by conflicting testimonies or introduced in the wrong place, are almost unavoidable in sitting down to the task of historical composition. We may expect to find in the first rude draught of such a work innumerable alterations; a blurred, blotted, and perhaps scarcely readable page; but it was not so with Goldsmith. Compelled often to write quickly and yet write well, and the means being wanting to enable him to employ an amanuensis, early enforced the necessity of methodising his ideas so as to save the trouble of transcription; the erasures and alterations are therefore few and



merely verbal. The same fact was noticed by Bishop Percy in the manuscripts of his histories ; a happiness which few even of the most ready and practised writers attain.

His orthography as has been remarked of other eminent men of the time\*, is sometimes inaccurate, sometimes antiquated, exhibiting strong indications of haste and carelessness. Thus we have the words "comerce," "allarms," "oppulence," "inrich," "inforce," "efects," "ecchoes," "atrac-tions," "comodities," "unactive," "undoe," and others. It may be likewise remarked as such circumstances are often matters of curiosity, that he covers the page so thoroughly as to leave no room for note or addition on either margin had it been necessary for such to be introduced ; on another occasion indeed, he declares distaste to notes as being commonly the marks of an unskilful writer.

The preface, too long to be transcribed here, but which will be found in the Works, is introduced by some general remarks on war as a source of occasional advantage and even of virtue to states, which are in a great degree new and ingenious, and explain some political phenomena

\* In the letters of Grainger the poet, in the possession of Mr. Mason, and noticed in a previous page, we find, for instance, *inabled*, *wholy*, *aboad*, &c. The neglect of orthography among persons of good education and *fashion* in that day, not writers by profession, would now be considered disgraceful.

operating not only in our own country in the present day, but in many of the states of Europe; that restlessness in nations, and that resistance to lawful authorities which a state of peace too often engenders. On the Dutch nation the remarks, whether correct or not, are such as he has verified in the Traveller.

The project of visiting the East, which had occupied his mind for a few previous and subsequent years, acquired new strength about this period by the accession of Lord Bute to office; some channel probably appearing through which to address that minister with a prospect of success. A memorial, enlarging the views formerly taken of this subject, was therefore drawn up, pointing out the advantages of a traveller proceeding thither for purposes of utility alone; and an impression prevailed among some of his acquaintance that the Princess-dowager of Wales had been prevailed upon to read and to approve of it. No favourable result ensued; the project being deemed visionary, or the name and influence of the proposer wanting sufficient weight among the public authorities to recommend him to such a mission. The Bishop of Dromore and Mr. Malone sought for this paper several years afterwards without success; and it is now probably irrecoverable.

Mr. Langton was accustomed to mention, in allusion to this scheme, that Goldsmith had long a visionary project that some time or other when his circumstances should be easier, he would go to

Aleppo in order to acquire a knowledge, as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the East, and introduce them into Britain. When this was talked of in Dr. Johnson's company, he said, "Of all men Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an inquiry; for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess, and consequently could not know what would be accessions to our present stock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding barrow, which you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement."

In this sally there was more of sarcasm than of truth. The ambition of Goldsmith to profit by what he could find new in the East, could scarcely be deemed very absurd, when a contemplated scheme by Johnson to see the same country with more limited purposes was viewed with complacency by himself, and applause by his friends. "At the time when his pension was granted to him," observes Mr. Langton, "he said, with noble literary ambition,—‘Had this happened twenty years ago, I should have gone to Constantinople to learn Arabick as Pocock did.’" Yet as the plan of Goldsmith necessarily included within its probable utility the study of the language and people without which he could not investigate their arts, it seems more like jealousy than justice in Johnson to ridicule in another, what at an earlier period of life confessedly formed a favourite wish of his own. The fact seems to have been either that Gold-

smith had not thought it necessary to explain himself fully in the loose statements of conversation, or that he was imperfectly understood by his hearers. Of merely mechanical arts, his knowledge probably was not great, neither perhaps so contemptibly small as represented, for the term embraces a wide range of objects. Having long revolved the project, he was not likely to be wholly unprepared for what he knew and stated to be a laborious task, and diligent attendance upon the London Society devoted to such pursuits, implied at least a taste for, if not acquaintance with, some of the objects contemplated in the journey. It is more than probable that his design had reference chiefly to certain processes in the arts connected in some degree with chemistry, a science with which he possessed considerable acquaintance. Thus in the paper quoted on the occasion of his memorial to Lord Bute, he expressly mentions the extraction of spirit from milk, an improved mode of dying scarlet, and the refining of lead into a purer and more valuable metal, as matters for inquiry; an explanation which removes from his project that air of absurdity cast upon it by Johnson. The reputation of a man should not be at the mercy of a sarcasm; yet in the pages of Boswell as well as in the reports of others, it is obvious he did not receive credit for the information he really possessed, or the facility with which such as was necessary for his purpose was acquired.

The strongest objection to the expedition was not urged against it, namely, that however ingenious in

idea, the harvest gleaned would probably have been small. Mechanical arts publicly practised in one country soon find their way to others without an express mission to import them; while such as affect secrecy and are in the hands of a few, will be guarded still more carefully from the knowledge of one sent expressly to discover in what the secret or superiority consists. By the view taken in the extract previously quoted, of the other requisites for such a traveller,—a philosophical turn, a mind tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, manners ameliorated by much intercourse with men, a body inured to fatigue, and a heart not easily terrified at danger,—he obviously points to himself; nor if these be the chief qualifications required, was he deficient in any of them.\*

\* By the account of Dr. Farr in conversation with the Poet when they met in London in 1756, his idea then was a journey to the Weitten Mountains. It is rather a curious coincidence, that, at this moment, another gentleman distinguished by his eccentricities, Edward Wortley Montague, entertained and accomplished the same design. He set off from Italy toward the end of 1762, and was absent about three years, travelling through the Holy Land, Egypt, and Armenia, with the Old and New Testaments in hand, finding them, as he says, unerring guides. An account of this journey was read before the Royal Society in March, 1766, and afterwards published in their Transactions.

## CHAP. XI.

VARIOUS LITERARY ENGAGEMENTS.—PAMPHLET ON THE COCK LANE GHOST.—HISTORY OF MECKLENBURGH.—ART OF POETRY.—PLUTARCH.—CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.—ADDITIONS TO A HISTORY OF ENGLAND.—LIFE OF BEAU NASH.—LINES SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN AT ORPINGTON.—CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.—ROBIN HOOD SOCIETY.—PETER ANNET.—LLOYD.—ROUBILIAC.

EARLY in 1762, Newbery found him variety of occupation in history, biography, the critical revision of several works, and even on a subject which, although made of importance by popular excitement and credulity, by the personal inquiries of Johnson, and by the satire of Churchill, was beneath the serious notice of either: this was the well known imposture of the Cock Lane Ghost. His receipt for the very moderate amount of copy-money in his own handwriting, now before the writer, is as follows:—

“Received from Mr. Newbery three guineas for a pamphlet respecting the Cock Lane Ghost.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“March 5, 1762.”

None of the newspaper announcements of the day state any thing on this absorbing topic as issuing from the shop of the apparent purchaser, and the precise title of the piece has not been there-



fore ascertained. It may perhaps have been a partnership affair ; and as Newbery had occasional connexion with Bristow, a neighbouring publisher, in other works, he may on this occasion likewise have been made the channel of publication ; an impression countenanced by the advertisement of a pamphlet on the subject which appeared on that source shortly before.\* Things of this kind commonly disappear with the thirst for wonders to which they owe their origin ; but if found, internal evidence will readily decide whether the conjecture of this being Goldsmith's performance be well founded.

One of the labours for his patron if we may believe the accounts of several personal acquaintance, for no certain evidence of the fact is at hand, and the work has been sought in vain, was a volume to which the popularity of the young Queen (Charlotte) gave origin. In February (26th), 1762, appeared, dedicated to her Majesty, "The History of Mecklenburgh, from the first Settlement of the Vandals in that Country to the

\* "To-morrow will be published, price 1s., The Mystery Revealed ; containing a Series of Transactions and authentic Memorials respecting the supposed Cock Lane Ghost, which have hitherto been concealed from the Public.

' Since now the living dare implead,  
Arraign him ! in the person of the dead.'

DRYDEN.

"Printed for W. Bristow in St. Paul's Churchyard."—*Public Advertiser*. Feb. 22, 1762.

present Time ; including a Period of about Three Thousand Years." It was diligently advertised, though without marked success, having failed to reach a second edition, which can be said of no other of his (if this really be his) compilations. Probably he revised rather than wrote it, or received so little for the volume as to be indifferent to its fate : for in the *British Magazine* where a better character might have been secured had he cared about the matter, it is simply noticed as "carefully compiled, but dry and uninteresting."

A few days afterwards (March 9th) came out in two volumes "The Art of Poetry on a new Plan ; illustrated with a great Variety of Examples from the best English Poets." This was a compilation by Newbery himself, revised, altered, and enlarged by the critical and poetical taste of Goldsmith, as he acknowledged to Dr. Percy. The dedication however to the Earl of Holderness, in return for an act of beneficence shown in his capacity of Secretary of State to a distressed foreigner on the application of the good-natured bookseller, is not only signed by the latter but obviously written by him in the fulness of gratitude. Neither has the advertisement traces of Goldsmith's usual point and spirit ; however desirous therefore of his aid in the prefatory matter to books by other writers as a means of success, Newbery, with something of the vanity of an author, felt no such diffidence about the merits of his own.

As a guide to youth in the cultivation of poetry.

whether as a study or an amusement, these volumes as giving the opinions of competent critics upon the merits of good authors are by no means contemptible. The preceptive part tells all that it is necessary to tell regarding an art which cannot be taught, and in which more than in most others precept is nearly useless. The illustrations are numerous, of great variety, and drawn commonly from the best sources. It is no reproach that much of the information is borrowed; but if the alleged compiler found time from his numerous avocations in trade to collect and arrange the observations scattered through the work on the merits of the various species of poetry he deserves credit for no ordinary diligence. But the remarks by which the specimens are introduced are often so original and just, in such good taste, and conveyed in so perspicuous a style, that it is probable a better critic and an abler writer than Newbery, however fair his talents, must have not merely revised but in part added to, or rewritten them.

Almost at the same moment (March 12.) a new work for a similar (the juvenile) class of readers was announced from the same prolific source.

“Mr. Newbery begs leave to offer to the young gentlemen and ladies of these kingdoms a Compendium of Biography; or an History of the Lives of those great Personages, both ancient and modern, who are most worthy of their Esteem and Imitation, and most likely to inspire their Minds with a

Love of Virtue." The plan, after something more in the same strain, was to commence with Plutarch; to be comprised in seven volumes, 18mo., one to appear every month at the moderate sum of eighteen pence; and with the further promise of being "abridged from the original Greek, with notes and reflections."

The compiler of this humble contribution to knowledge was Goldsmith. Biography was with him as with Johnson a favourite subject, had he enjoyed the requisite leisure for inquiring into those details without which its value is much diminished. From the present attempt he could derive nothing but the marketable value of the article, and this from the acknowledgment for two volumes appears to have been small; but by the manner in which they were got up in paper and embellishments, the publisher gave his project scarcely a chance of success had the intrinsic merit been greater. The first volume appeared on the 1st of May, the last in November, when the series ceased as it begun with the Greek biographer; the intention of carrying on the original design being probably damped by the success of a competitor, the British Plutarch, then in course of publication by Dilly. After the first four volumes had been completed, he procured in consequence of illness, the assistance of Mr. Joseph Collyer, whose name appears in a preceding page, and who found employment in some compilations of the time and in translations from the German, one of which the Noah of

Bodmer, was given after the manner of the Death of Abel. The receipt from the Poet for the sum awarded to his labours was in advance of the publication; and seems, from several others of similar date and given on the same sheet of paper, to have been a kind of general settling day between author and bookseller.

“Received from Mr. Newbery eleven guineas and an half for an abridgment of Plutarch’s Lives.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“March 5, 1762.”

During the progress of the work through the press the following note without date, seems to have been written to prevent any delay in publication in consequence of his indisposition :—

“*To Mr. Newbery, St. Paul’s Churchyard.*

“DEAR SIR,

“As I have been out of order for some time past, and am still not quite recovered, the fifth volume of Plutarch’s Lives remains unfinished. I fear I shall not be able to do it unless there be an actual necessity, and that none else can be found. If therefore you would send it to Mr. Collier, I should esteem it a kindness, and will pay for whatever it may come to.—N.B. I received twelve guineas for the two volumes.

“I am, Sir, your obliged,

“Humble servant,

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“Pray let me have an answer.”

From an impression probably that the work would not be so well done by any one else, this proposal seems not to have been acceded to at the moment, although Collyer was ultimately employed; and under the feeling of being urged to do what his strength scarcely permitted, he despatched a second and less cordial note.

*“ To Mr. Newbery.*

“ SIR,

“ One volume is done, namely, the fourth. When I said I should be glad Mr. Collier\* would do the fifth for me, I only demanded it as a favour; but if he cannot conveniently do it, though I have kept my chamber these three weeks, and am not quite recovered, yet I will do it. I send it per bearer; and if the affair puts you to the least inconvenience, return it, and it shall be done immediately.

“ I am, &c.

“ O. G.

“ The printer has the copy of the rest.”

His connection with this little work, although disclosed after his death by Newbery's successors in trade, has been since unnoticed and even unknown: the knowledge of it reached the writer among other traditional notices, and on reference to the preliminary advertisement, the pen of the

\* This gentleman's name was usually spelt “ Collyer.”



Poet became immediately obvious to him long previous\* to the preceding documents, which may be more satisfactory to others, coming into his hands. But there are persons, and Goldsmith himself seems to have been of the number, who think it injudicious to make known whatever an author himself desires to conceal or does not avow; that his anonymous, hasty, or casual performances should pass without challenge from any quarter; that in short the world has a right to know and notice only such of his productions as are written for reputation and not for bread.

Yet this can scarcely be a sound opinion. Were it strictly to be followed, literary history would no longer possess its strongest interest. We should lose the advantages derived from tracing step by step the progress of mind in its advances to perfection; of knowing its labours and struggles on the path to eminence; what small objects were accomplished before great ones were attempted; what subjects employed the pen or the thoughts of a distinguished writer at a particular epoch of his career; and aspiring though obscure worth would lose the benefit derived from tracking their great predecessors in the road to distinction, and want the best stimulus to pursue their example by learning not to despair, for that fame is rarely the result of a moment or of chance, but of time and industry. The pride of authors is something like that of beauties: it may induce them to wish to

\* Nearly three years.

be seen only in their finished works, as the latter prefer being exhibited in full dress when tricked out for show or conquest: but those they would influence or subdue have a right to more intimate acquaintance, and must not be thought impertinently curious in seeking it. There is a youth in authorship as in life; and we would inquire whether the period of immaturity has been idly or laboriously spent. It is not necessary we should approve the species of labour pursued, but we like to know what was the employment of the labourer.

His characteristic address in propitiating the favour of the reader is displayed in the commendatory notice.

“ Biography has ever since the days of Plutarch been considered as the most useful manner of writing, not only from the pleasure it affords the imagination, but from the instruction it artfully and unexpectedly conveys to the understanding. It furnishes us with an opportunity of giving advice freely and without offence. It not only removes the dryness and dogmatical air of precept, but sets persons, actions, and their consequences, before us in the most striking manner; and by that means turns even precept into example.

“ The perverseness, folly, and pride of men, seldom suffer advice given in the common manner to be effectual. Nor is this to be wondered at; for though there is no action in life that requires greater delicacy, yet few are conducted with less. The advice of parents and preceptors is generally

given in an austere and authoritative manner which destroys the feelings of affection ; and that of friends, by being frequently mixed with asperity and reproof, seems rather calculated to exalt their own wisdom than to amend our lives, and has too much the appearance of a triumph over our defects.

“ Counsels, therefore, as well as compliments, are best conveyed in an indirect and oblique manner ; and this renders biography as well as fable a most convenient vehicle for instruction. An ingenious gentleman was asked what was the best lesson for youth ? he answered, *The life of a good man*. Being again asked what was the next best ? he replied, *The life of a bad one*. The first would make him in love with virtue, and teach him how to conduct himself through life so as to become an ornament to society and a blessing to his family and friends ; and the last would point out the hateful and horrid consequences of vice, and make him careful to avoid those actions which appeared so detestable in others.”

The same day that introduced Plutarch brought forth in two duodecimo volumes, as the newspapers announced, “ The Citizen of the World ; or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher residing in London, to his Friends in the East. *Printed for the Author :*” — the only intimation of a similar kind attached to any of his publications. Newbery may have at first declined republishing what had sufficiently answered his purpose in the Ledger ; but when about to issue from the press,

he appears from the following either to have become the purchaser or to have paid up an outstanding account, as the old not the new title is employed. The whole amount given does not appear.

“Received of Mr. Newbery five guineas, which, with what I have received at different times before, is in full for the copy of the Chinese Letters, as witness my hand.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“March 5, 1762.”

The relinquishment of the original designation Chinese Letters which was applied as it would seem rather by others than by the author as it is assumed rather by the editor than by him, arose probably from a production of the Marquis D'Argens, translated into English in 1741, being extant under the same title; a coincidence likewise to be remarked of two other works indebted to his pen, “The Bee,” and the “British Magazine,” both of which names had been previously used for popular compilations. The idea commonly implied by the designation now assumed for the volumes, that of a person so attached, or so indifferent, to all countries as to give particular preference to none, is noticed with approbation in more than one passage in his Essays. “Among all the famous sayings of antiquity,” he writes in the British Magazine, “there is none that does greater honour to the author, or affords greater pleasure to the reader (at least if he

be a person of a generous and benevolent heart). than that of the philosopher, who being asked what countryman he was, replied, "A Citizen of the World." And again, "I must own I should prefer the title of the ancient philosopher, viz. a Citizen of the World, to that of an Englishman, a Frenchman, an European, or to any other appellation whatever."

Philosophical fallacies equally specious and quite as unsound as this have been often adopted by men who knew better; misled for the moment by insufficient consideration, the pretension of a character imposing in name to the ignorant, or possibly deceived by real benevolence of disposition. Yet it is difficult to think that any who advanced the opinions just quoted really believed in their justness; the common feelings of human nature rise up in judgment against the theory, and the first practical effort we are called upon to make, of benevolence for instance or preference in any way, shows its insufficient foundation. It can scarcely be true that any person exists who has no preference of country, and if true, not perhaps very creditable to him who avows it. Providence seems to have ordered that our affections move within certain circles, first our family, second our neighbourhood, and thirdly our country, and no great good may be expected to arise from forgetting either of these, our natural and proper care, to assume His providence in extending equal attachment to places and persons of whom we can know little.

It may be true that an individual does not prefer his native land, but all lands cannot be equally indifferent. If we totally disconnect from our minds the tie of country, we may do the same with that of kindred, and advancing a step further in heartless philosophy, proceed to sever all the links of human connexion. That benevolence which is so general and indiscriminate as to affect to embrace all mankind, is commonly to be suspected: it is seldom seen exerted where most wanted, that is in the active aid of the individuals composing the community for which regard is professed in the gross: like a small portion of manure spread over a large tract of soil, the fructifying power is lost—it wants concentration. Such philosophy is indeed but a shadow which in pursuing, may deprive us of the substance of much practical good; its tendency is to loosen what may be called the local, yet powerful and kindlier, affections of our nature.

Besides the letters printed in our newspaper series, other papers deemed worthy of being preserved and which had appeared either in a different form or in other publications, were introduced into the volumes, in order as it was avowed to make the work more perfect. Thus, No. 108, *The Advantages of sending a Traveller into Asia to bring back the useful Knowledge of that Country*, No. 115, *On the Dignity of Human Nature*, and a few more, are from the *Ledger*; No. 117, *A City Night-piece*, from the *Bee*; No. 119, *The Distresses of a Common Soldier*, from the *British*



Magazine; and there are others taken from the newspaper during the year 1761. Several, where the subjects appeared to be connected, were transposed on republication from the places in which they originally stood in the series and a few were added wholly new.

No aid seems to have been given him by the contributions of others, and indeed there is presumptive evidence of the fact in the progress of the letters, although a contrary belief prevailed at the time. Thus, in the *British Magazine*—and it exhibits some disregard for the common arts of literary puffing that in a publication with which he was connected no more favourable or extended criticism appeared—it is laconically characterised, “Light, agreeable summer reading, partly original, partly borrowed.” A similar impression is to be drawn from the qualified terms used in an advertisement in the *London Chronicle*, in May, 1766—“The greater part of this work was written by Dr. Goldsmith.” The error in both instances of giving him credit for the authorship only in part, arose from having reclaimed his labours from other quarters without the critics who had seen them there being aware of his right of appropriation. The publisher at length thought it necessary to intimate in one of his announcements that all were the offspring of one author:—“These volumes contain all those Chinese Letters which gave so much pleasure and satisfaction in the *Public Ledger*, together with such

originals as were necessary to complete the author's design."

The fortune of books as indicative of public negligence or caprice, has often been the subject of remark; and this edition of one, popular in its first form and ever since admitted to possess all the qualities deserving of favour, may be instanced, among others. It did not sell in the manner expected, either from the change of title rendering it less generally known, or from wanting the countenance of an approved name. No intimation of a second impression appears so late as May, 1766, when the name of the author then rendered popular by the success of the Traveller was used in order to dispose of the first; and a third edition did not come out till about 1780. While neglected at home, however, the Citizen of the World found favour abroad:—a French translation by M. Poivre, who sent Goldsmith a copy in addition to a very complimentary letter which disappeared among others of his papers after death, came out in 1763, and in three years passed through four editions in that country.

Shortly after this period, another effort of industry in the service of the booksellers is known by the following acknowledgment:—

"Received two guineas of Mr. Newbery, for the conclusion of the English History.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"July 7th, 1762."

A second memorandum gives him credit among other copies though without a price affixed, for "79 leaves of the History of England." Attentive examination among the publications of the day has probably ascertained the exact nature of this historical fragment, which was of no value and therefore not necessary to rescue from oblivion. A school-book, a History of England in the form of question and answer, had been published as joint property\* by several booksellers, and proving successful additions were thought necessary to raise it still further in estimation. An announcement of September 23, has this notice affixed:—"The 11th edition, with the addition of five sheets, containing the long and glorious reign of our late most glorious sovereign, George the Second, to the accession of his present Majesty." The five sheets thus added would amount within one, to the exact number of pages, or, as it is written, leaves, noted in the publisher's account.

In the summer of 1762 he visited Bath; partly for the restoration of health, partly it is said by desire of Newbery, in order to add to a small stock of materials already collected and shaped into form for a new publication,—an account of the well known Beau Nash, Master of the Ceremonies there, who had died at an advanced age, and after a long tenure of office, the preceding year.

\* The proprietors were Hawes, Woodfall, Newbery, Baldwin, and others.

It is not often that gentlemen of this profession make claims upon the biographer. Necessity could be the sole inducement to the undertaking, for of such a person what more could be said than a newspaper paragraph might tell? But Nash possessed a species of conventional celebrity that rendered him not only an object of general notice and conversation, but made him the first of his class who have figured in this country. In the mingled characters of gamester, (said indeed to be a generous one,) beau, a man of pleasure, a reputed wit, and the king as he was called, or improver if not founder of a favourite scene of summer resort for the wealthy and the fashionable, the invalid and the idle, he was known personally or by name to most persons in the kingdom. Fame therefore would seem to appertain not solely to the able or the great. To gratify curiosity respecting one so much talked of, who retained his sway to a patriarchal age, there appeared, on the 14th of October, 1762, "The Life of Richard Nash, Esq., late Master of the Ceremonies at Bath. Extracted principally from his original Papers.

——— Non ego paucis  
Offendar maculis.

HOR."

Notwithstanding the numerous stories told of this gentleman, some address was required to make out a respectable volume, the facts communicated being few, and even these considered

to be in want of a guarantee of authenticity, which the publisher found it expedient to give. "We have the permission of George Scott, Esq. (who kindly undertook to settle the affairs of Mr. Nash for the benefit of his family and creditors), to assure the public that all the papers found in the custody of Mr. Nash, which any ways respected his life, and were thought interesting to the public, were communicated to the editor of this volume; so that the reader will at least have the satisfaction of perusing an account that is genuine, and not the work of imagination, as biographical writings too commonly are."

Among the papers thus said to be given is a long communication on the destructive vice of gaming, supposed to be written by a correspondent of Nash, but more probably by the editor, whose admonitions on the subject are impressive; one or two letters by the Duchess of Marlborough and Pope; and the history of a young lady apparently well known at the time, who terminated a life somewhat equivocal by suicide. The reflections are numerous and ingenious; said indeed to constitute the chief part of a book, the whole of which indicated a practised hand. By some it was said to have been written in imitation of Johnson's *Life of Savage*; but of this there is no other trace or resemblance than that Goldsmith, like Johnson, tried how much could be made out of slender materials by a skilful workman. Savage, however, was a poet whose writings, imprudences, and birth,

afforded themes to discuss, follies to lament, and misfortunes to commiserate: Nash could but boast of being a mere *arbiter ineptiarum*, whose highest effort of mind was a jest, and engaged in occupations too trifling for serious description. With such opposite subjects to treat, no competition could exist between the authors. By a memorandum among Newbery's papers, it appears that Johnson had curiosity enough to purchase the book though we have no record of his opinion; and early in December it reached a second edition.

Among his critics was Lloyd, then editor of the *St. James's Magazine*, who thus adverts to its want of incident:—"If the good-natured editor did not step in upon all occasions, the public must have been contented with a pamphlet instead of a book." But an imputation contained in the volume upon Quin, the actor, who had retired from the stage and resided in Bath, formed the subject of sharper strictures, either from the pen of the critic or one of his correspondents. Among the alleged papers of Nash were found a letter, wretchedly spelt, said to be written by Quin to a nobleman soliciting his assistance in the design of supplanting the Master of the Ceremonies in his situation, which letter through some means had been communicated to the object of the supposed plot by being found in his possession; it was no doubt one of those vulgar deceptions called a hoax, played off upon Nash as a source of annoyance, for though aged and irritable, he was still assuming



and vain. In the Magazine instead of being viewed in this light, it was dwelt upon as a calumny of the biographer upon the actor; and in addition to other animadversions, produced an epigram rather more abusive than severe, which as the war of wits forms a fruitful source of amusement to all but the combatants, is subjoined for that of the reader.\*

His own estimate of the value of his labours, as exhibited in the preface and introductory remarks, is sufficiently moderate: they exhibit his usual ingenuity in making a graceful apology for introducing what he knew to be a trifling subject. Few who now read this volume, and it is some, times taken up by such as search for anecdotes of the past †, are aware of Goldsmith being the author; the fact though known soon after publication and mentioned by contemporaries, seems,

\* “*To the Editor of Nash’s Life.*”

“Think’st thou that Quin, whose parts and wit  
Might any station grace,  
Could e’en such ribald stuff have writ,  
Or wish’d for Nash’s place?”

“With scorn we read thy senseless trash,  
And see thy toothless grin,  
For Quin no more could sink to Nash,  
Than thou canst rise to Quin.”

† The subject was lately dramatised with some degree of success by Mr. Jerrold: he was not aware probably of the authority to whom he was obliged. A book appeared a year or two after the *Life*, called “*Nash’s Jests*,” in which Goldsmith had no share. The compiler, from a memorandum of Newbery, seems to have been Mr. Griffith Jones.

like others of his labours to be nearly obliterated from recollection. Five weeks are reported to have been spent on the composition ; and if we consider the ingenuity demanded to make a readable book on such a subject, and the trouble of even transcribing two hundred and forty octavo pages, he would appear by the following, to have been very poorly remunerated. By the date, it seems to have been given in advance.

“ Received from Mr. Newbery at different times, and for which gave receipts, fourteen guineas, which is in full for the copy of the Life of Mr. Nash.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ March 5, 1762.”

By the preceding account, we discover that he did not want diligence ; and as much of his future life exhibits similar struggles of labour with necessity, the accusation of idleness sometimes urged against him will appear to be undeserved. A charge of this kind applied to a literary man, and it is one of frequent occurrence, is not always easy, however unjust it may be in itself, to rebut. His moments of relaxation commonly admit of general notice ; while those of study, of intense perhaps and long-continued meditation, are necessarily unseen ; the amusement of an hour by such as judge hastily, may be exaggerated into the negligence of a day ; and those to whom he has incurred pecuniary obligation and who impatiently look for repayment, are prone perhaps to consider

as an idler him who is simply a debtor. Yet mental labour as much more exhausting than bodily, requires proportionate indulgence: the rest of a night fits the labourer or mechanic for the occupations of the following day; but months may be requisite to restore tone and vigour to the mind exhausted in the completion of a literary performance.

The illness alluded to in the note regarding Plutarch and other attacks which it appears he had previously experienced, arose from a painful disease brought on by constant application to his desk. To escape this drudgery, short excursions were made into the country whenever an interval of leisure permitted: Tunbridge and Bath were among his favourite places of resort; and sometimes lodgings were taken a short distance from London, where when not required for the necessary duty of correcting the press, he could work undisturbed for short periods. One of these in 1760 and 1761 was remembered to be in the village of Orpington in Kent, where some lines said to be written on the window of a cottage he frequented, and which appeared in the *British Magazine*, were, it cannot now be known with what truth, attributed to him.\* A similar effusion of his genius

\* " Stay, traveller; and though within  
Nor gold nor glittering gems are seen,  
To strike the ravish'd eye,  
Yet enter, and thy well-pleased mind,  
Beneath this humble roof shall find,  
What gold can never buy.

or whim was mentioned by the late Sir George Beaumont, as having been left at a village inn when travelling in Leicestershire, but the name of the place as well as the lines were forgotten.

A translation of the works of Voltaire commenced in 1761, and continued monthly for about two years, under the names of Smollett, the Rev. Dr. Francklin and others, and of which Newbery was one of the proprietors, was supposed to have given occasional occupation to Goldsmith. No proof of this however has been found: the papers of that publisher state the price paid for the translation to be two guineas per sheet; and in giving the expenses of each volume for the information of the partners, the entry simply is without giving names, "Author 25*l.*;" varying according to the size of the volume to 26*l.* and 27*l.* The work is still met with in the shops, and a slight inspection sufficiently proves he did not write the preface, which is deficient in the usual characteristics of his manner. The writings of such an author as Voltaire were probably thought capable of recommending themselves.

A more certain depository of his occasional contributions appears to have been another monthly

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"Within this solitary cell,  
 Calm thought and sweet contentment dwell,  
       Parents of bliss sincere;  
 Peace spreads abroad her balmy wings,  
 And, banish'd from the court of kings,  
       Has fix'd her mansion here."

publication of Newbery, "The Christian's Magazine," edited at this time or soon afterward by the unfortunate Dr. Dodd, several of whose letters connected with it are still in existence.\* What

\* Various memorandums of their accounts, besides the subjoined, exist, from which it appeared that seven guineas was the sum received by Dr. Dodd for each number of the Magazine.

"The Rev. Mr. Dodd's account.

15 Nos. Magazine, at £7	7	0	.....	£110	5	0
2 Supplements .... at 4	4	0	.....	8	8	0
				<hr/>		
				118	13	0
125 Visitors, &c. ... at 0	6	0	.....	37	10	0
				<hr/>		
				£156	3	0

Stated August 21st, 1761. Jno. Newbery

Paid drafts ..... £183 0 0

By the above ..... 156 3 0

Due to J. N. ... £26 17 0

A few letters of this clever but unhappy man, connected with this Magazine and other literary designs or engagements, may not be without interest for the reader. The first appears to have been written in 1764, and they indicate the existence of those pecuniary difficulties to which his lamentable end is to be attributed.

"DEAR SIR,

"It gave me very sensible concern to hear you was so indifferent. I wish by consulting your friends in the physical way, you could meet with some relief.

"With respect to Dr. Lowth's Prelections, I have more to say to you when we meet, which I hope will be soon, as we come to town on Friday; when, or any day you please, I shall be glad to see you at the chaplain's table, or at our house next door to the royal Jelly House, Pall Mall. As to Sir Roger, I repeat again what I said at first, that if you can make any thing out of it, it is quite at your disposal. I should be glad you would

description of pieces were supplied by him at this time we have no means of ascertaining, probably

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take it wholly under your management, that I might hear no more of it, but as conducted by you ; and if you should like the proposal, the papers, scheme, &c. are all at your service for one hundred pounds ; for which sum I will entirely give it up, and wish it may be rendered useful and profitable to you. I am really ashamed to be so troublesome to you, but upon my removal, I am a little straitened ; and should not the above proposal be acceptable, should esteem myself greatly obliged to you for £80 ; which if I do not work out from the things already done (the Christian Religion Vindicated, &c.) I should be glad to give you a note for, or a Bible, or any other account. If you can oblige me, I will draw by Mr. Perchard in ten days after sight.

“ Pray what do you think of my employing Mr. Butler, in translating the lives of the modern philosophers by Savarien ? I believe it will come into 2 vols. 8vo. I should be glad, that, in advertising the Christian's Mag. this month, it might be said, ‘ In the Christian's Mag. for this month a translation is given of the learned Professor Hoffman's celebrated Treatise concerning lengthening the Lives of *Students by Regimen.*’ Mrs. Dodd begs her compliments to Mrs. Newbery, and will be glad to see her in Pall Mall.

“ I am ever yours,

“ West Ham. Oct. 28.

“ W. DODD.

“ I should be glad of an answer as soon as is convenient.”

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have drawn as usual for £22, and must now request of you and the partners in the Bible that you will be so obliging as to answer that draft for a £100, which you was so good as to accept for me. After this I will trouble you and them no more on the Bible account till the end of the year, and therefore I hope you will not judge my request unreasonable. I should be glad you would send me word, whether you would have Mr. B. proceed on *Herbelot* : that if you think it will not answer we may employ him at leisure hours in something more



moral stories and serious essays appropriate to the work ; but in the following year he furnished

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likely to succeed, and it would be a favour if you could think of any such work. Be so good as to order your people to find me the volumes of Buffon, when it is convenient. And when your search into our laborious journals is finished, please to return them to, dear Sir,

“ Your very sincere and obliged friend,

“ W. DODD.

“ West Ham, April 6. 1765.

“ Oct. 31. 1765. One month to Perchard, £80 0 0.”

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have expected often the pleasure of seeing you, but how have I been disappointed ! Surely you and Mrs. Newbery must have mistaken something, and if so we are sorry, and desire to make amends, or we should have seen some of you in Pall Mall. I have drawn 14 days after date for £26. As life is uncertain with us both, I should be glad to settle some books, &c. had on my own account (not the Magazine) from your shop : I know not what they may come to ; but if you please, I will assign to you the property of the *Reflections on Death* and the Truth of the *Christian Religion*, and give mutual receipts on both sides. If not, as shall be most agreeable to you. I am,

“ Dear Sir,

“ Very sincerely yours,

“ W. D.

“ Pall Mall, Jan. 27. 1766.”

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I should be the last man in the world to wish you to carry on any thing to your prejudice, and therefore must acquiesce in what you have said respecting the *Christian's Magazine* ; but I could have wished that it had been dropped in a less abrupt manner, or that you had been pleased to have given me more time to have consulted about it ; as I should be extremely happy to continue it if I could, as I had great pleasure in the work ; or at least, I could have wished to have seen this volume

two or more translations, which will be noticed in the proper place. Griffith Jones, it appears, com-

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completed. I have therefore only to request of you, that you will undertake the publication of the number for this month, for which I am so far from desiring any thing on my own part, that I will very readily pay you any balance of loss on the sale, and for the future, I will give you no more trouble concerning it. I once before mentioned, that there being an account standing between us for books, &c. I should be extremely glad for both our sakes to have it settled; and I mentioned that if you judged it right, I was willing to give you a receipt in full for the copies you have had of mine, and to receive the same from your hands. I am very sorry to hear your gouty complaint is still so troublesome to you: it will give me great pleasure to find you are better; for there is nobody who wishes your welfare more truly than

“Dear Sir,

“Yours affectionately,

“W. DODD.

“Southampton Row,  
14th July, 1767.”

Mr. John Newbery had died in the interval between the above and the following.

“Dr. Dodd's compliments to Mr. T. Newbery. He is a little surprised at seeing the Christian's Magazine advertised as *printed for the author*; which he begs may be altered, as it was published upon the plan of the rest, by the appointment, and at the desire of the late Mr. Newbery; and who also, contrary to Dr. Dodd's opinion, chose to make it 1s. price.

“Southampton Row,  
2d Feb. 1768.”

“Southampton Row, 6th Jan. 1769.

“Sir,

“You receive some books by the bearer, of which those marked with a X were had for the general business of the Magazine, and were to be returned; for the rest, they are what I can find out of the number had for the current business

piled the monthly compendium of miscellaneous intelligence for the very moderate remuneration of a guinea each number.

Toward the end of the year he contemplated a popular compilation on Philosophy, induced by the persuasions of his indefatigable employer, who perceived that such works, when tolerably well executed found a ready reception from the inquiring spirit of the age. He had previously revised there is reason to believe, some works on this subject by Martin, a philosophical instrument-

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of the work ; which certainly are my property,—if such property were worth the claiming,—and for which I do not consider myself as at all accountable. However, what I have returned are at your service, to make the best of them. Some others mentioned in your account were returned long ago : those which belong to my own account, I have marked with red ink. Mr. Butler, no more than myself, remembers any thing of a message forbidding the publication of “ *The Truth of Christianity*.” Nay, I do venture positively to declare, that no such message was ever sent by me or my order : and in this state of things, I repeat, what I before offered, and that I am willing, in order to save trouble on both sides, to give and take a receipt in full ; that is to say, these books being returned to me, which I now send, be they valued as they may, and the set of *Buffon’s* being made up complete so far as you have them. I cannot help observing what I did before, that the books throughout the account are all very highly charged, and certainly beyond their worth. I shall be very ready to unite in any undertaking which may render your interest in the *Christian’s Magazine* more important ; and shall be glad at all times to show my great regard for my late friend Mr. Newbery, by any means in my little power. I am, Sir,

“ Your very humble servant,

“ W. DODD.”

maker of Fleet Street; and though necessarily deficient in practical acquaintance with such subjects, conceived himself theoretically at least not uninformed. The chief facts, were meant to be drawn from the most recent and competent sources, while much was anticipated in description and mode of arrangement from the taste and genius of the compiler. To prepare for the undertaking a course of philosophical reading was commenced, and various additions made to his library with the same view, so that however defective such cheap compendiums of knowledge may be, more diligence is often used in the getting them up than their compilers receive credit for from the learned. The fruits of these studies will be hereafter noticed; for the present they made little progress in consequence of other and more attractive employment of an historical nature. Newbery's memorandum of the books now supplied to him in order to furnish part of the necessary information is as follows :—

“ Nov. 25, 1762.

“ Lent Dr. Goldsmith.

- 1 Martin's Philosophy, 3 vols. 8vo.
- 1 Kiel's Introduction.
- 1 Macquart's Chemistry, 3 vols. French.
- 1 Encyclopædia, 8 vols. folio. French.
- 1 Chinese Letters. French.
- 1 Persian Ditto.
- 1 Pemberton's Views of Newton's Philosophy.
- 1 Hale's Vegetable Statics, 2 vols. 8vo.
- 1 Ferguson's Astronomy, 4to.
- 1 Buffon's Natural History, 9 vols. 4to.
- 1 The Origin of Laws, Arts, and Sciences, 3 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh.”

Ready as we find him upon such a variety of subjects, it may be doubted considering the manner in which literature was then remunerated, whether the amount of money received formed even a tolerable income. He boasted on one occasion of being able to make four guineas by the labour of a day : this may have been true, as such sums were occasionally paid for prefaces, and introductions that might have been thrown off within that time. Authors perhaps desire even when not strictly authorised by fact, to have the reputation of large sums affixed to their productions ; and the desire is not less strong in those of the present day than in the past. Publishers likewise form an interested party in such statements, for while the vanity of the one is flattered, the property of the other is thought to be enhanced, as that is necessarily inferred to be good, the cost of which has been great. Yet if these representations were always correct, we should scarcely find those who afford currency to such rumours furnishing proofs in their conduct or their complaints of frequently suffering under the evils of an unprofitable profession.

It may be a source of curiosity therefore to trace his income as far as can be ascertained, during this year of acknowledged industry. The pamphlet on the Cock Lane Ghost as appears was three guineas ; the history of Mecklenburgh if he were actually the author, may be estimated by the value of other works at twenty pounds ; revising the Art

of Poetry, ten pounds; seven volumes of Plutarch, forty-five pounds; Citizen of the World, probably ten or fifteen pounds; five sheets of the History of England, two guineas; Life of Nash, fourteen guineas; occasional pieces, such as Essays, Prefaces, and Criticisms, perhaps twenty pounds; making together less than one hundred and twenty pounds. When we consider the time required for these various works, it is not probable he could have written any thing of moment for another publisher; and there is little doubt, as we find in the instance of Collyer, that he occasionally paid for assistance. With this deduction from small means there might still be something left for a strict economist, though little to gratify the pride of literature; and in all the labours of the year there was nothing conducive in any degree to fame. Yet without some latent hope of futurity having better prospects in store,—the vague though encouraging impression that at a more favourable moment genius would take wing in nobler and more enduring flights,—who would devote himself to drudgery like this, at once constant, solitary, and ill requited?

Occasionally we find him mingling in scenes of amusement, or pursuing objects of popular curiosity; frequently as we may believe from his remarks in order to turn them in some way to account. One of these, in the summer of 1762, was the Cherokee chiefs then in London, and sought after eagerly by the inquisitive and idle; a visit to whom



gave origin to a humorous story told by Derrick, well known by his poems and letters, and once master of the ceremonies at Bath. Having made a present of some trifle to one of the Indians during the interview, the latter, delighted with the gift, and remembering one of the European modes of endearment, stooped and embraced Goldsmith with so much cordiality as to leave behind part of the red ochre with which he was plentifully bedaubed, upon his face, and being seen in this state, was teased by the wags of his acquaintance with using *rouge*.

The philosophical use made of this interview exhibits the readiness with which a trifling incident is turned to the purpose of illustrating one of the leading passions of human nature, whether civilised or savage, the desire for dress and ornament. "I remember," he says, "when the Cherokee kings were over here, that I have waited for three hours during the time they were dressing. They never would venture to make their appearance till they had gone through the tedious ceremonies of the toilet: they had their boxes of oil and ochre, their fat and their perfumes, like the most effeminate beau, and generally took up four hours in dressing before they considered themselves as fit to be seen. We must not therefore consider delicacy in point of dress as a mark of refinement, since savages are much more difficult in this particular, than the most fashionable or tawdry Euro-

pean. The more barbarous the people, the fonder of finery." \*

One of the scenes whither he was led, for occasional amusement more perhaps than it was voluntarily sought, was the well-known debating society of the Robin Hood, held at a house of that name in Butcher Row, whither it had been removed from the Essex Head, in Essex Street in the Strand, about 1747. The payment of sixpence formed the only requisite for admission, three halfpence of which were said to be put apart for purposes of charity. Monday evening was the period of meeting: the annual number of visitors averaged about 5,000: a gilt chair indicated the presiding authority; and all questions, not excepting religion and politics, were open to discussion on being previously entered in a book kept for that purpose. Such a privilege on topics on which men never have and probably never will agree, as may be supposed in such miscellaneous assemblages, was abused. On religious matters particularly, blasphemous notions were frequently broached, which, however open to refutation, and they were refuted and have always been refuted as often as advanced, produced injury to the minds of the class of persons, frequently illiterate or half-informed, who formed the majority of the auditors. In poisons of the mind, as in those of

\* *Animated Nature*, vol. ii. p. 97. 8vo. Lond. 1774.

the body, the antidote cannot wholly eradicate the evil; and the wise will not willingly expose themselves to the one in order to test the efficacy of the other. At length these discussions were pronounced by many persons a public nuisance; and several of the clergy, among whom was the eminent Mr. Romaine, thought proper to stigmatise them in their addresses from the pulpit.

The president, who is said to have checked this spirit when in his power, was a Mr. Caleb Jeacocke, who united the trades of baker and accomptant; and being possessed of considerable native acuteness and vigour of mind, a smattering of knowledge on popular topics, and fair character, promised by the early tenure and long possession of authority, and his superiority over others in his own station in life, to become perpetual dictator. He was fond of the office, though gratuitous;—had sufficient energy of character to keep his motley audience sometimes in order; and frequently quitting the character of moderator, joined in the discussion in order to prove his claim to power. Here young men attached to the liberal professions, incipient debaters, and others, resorted as to a place of intellectual exercise; sometimes to listen to, sometimes to answer, the “eloquent baker.” It was on one of these occasions that Goldsmith, after hearing him give utterance to a train of strong and ingenious reasoning, involuntarily exclaimed, “That man was meant by nature for a lord chancellor.” A witticism now stale from frequent repetition, is said

to have originated on this occasion. The remark was addressed to Derrick; who, after a moment's pause, replied in allusion to his occupation, "No, no, not so high; he was only intended for *master of the rolls*." He became, however, after laying down his hammer as president of the Robin Hood Society, a magistrate, and, as is said, a useful one, for the county of Middlesex.

It appears, if we are to believe an account of this debating assemblage published soon afterward, that Goldsmith occasionally took part in the discussions; on what subjects does not appear: but from a degree of diffidence which rendered him easily liable to be disconcerted, we may believe the occasions were not numerous. Among notices of the frequenters of the meeting we find the following favourable sketch of him:—

(“*Mr. G \* \* d \* \* \* th.*”)

“A man of learning and judgment: author of ‘An Enquiry into the modern State of Literature in Europe,’ and many other ingenious works; a good orator and candid disputant, with a clear head and an honest heart. He comes but seldom to the society.”\*

One of the strange characters among whom he was thrown here and in other places, in consequence of professing attachment to letters though now enjoying a different and unenviable notoriety, was

\* History of the Robin Hood Society. 18mo. Lond. 1764.

Mr. Peter Annet. He had been brought up to the profession of medicine, one which to a wise and reflecting man offers peculiar opportunities of viewing in the structure of his species abundant evidences of the power and glory of his Creator; but which by the shallow and presumptuous is sometimes made a source of doubt; because as they find matter only under the dissecting knife, and not spirit, they are tempted to conclude its existence questionable, or in other words countenance materialism; a class of philosophers to whom the description of Burke in speaking of narrow-minded politicians so strongly applies; men who understand and value nothing “but what they can measure with a two-foot rule, what they can tell upon ten fingers.” Annet was of this order; and pushing his doctrine to its natural results, not only professed disbelief of Christianity but exhibited the zeal of a fanatic in propagating his tenets. He had but few pretensions to literature and wrote nothing which deserves to be remembered. The press, however, being made the medium of assailing the religion of his country, the law interposed; and being convicted of blasphemy, he was sentenced to imprisonment and the pillory,—the latter being twice carried into execution toward the end of December 1762.

While in prison, where Archbishop Secker relieved the wants of the man while he remonstrated against the tenets of the unbeliever, he employed himself in writing a small work on Grammar. When

finished, Goldsmith was requested to recommend it to Newbery, which was readily done, being unobjectionable in its nature; and to conclude the bargain in person, he carried the bookseller to the King's Bench prison. A sum was offered something more than had been expected by the author, who out of gratitude immediately volunteered a dedication, and as a further recommendation of the work in his own opinion, decided to put his name to it. Newbery, for obvious reasons, hesitated to accept this offer; the author strongly reiterated his fancied generosity; when at length it became necessary to hint, that the name of a gentleman subjected to the pillory for insults to the religion of his country placed in the title-page of a book chiefly intended for youth, would effectually mar its circulation. The remark roused his pride; in vain the force of the objection was delicately urged; he became angry, and swore that no bookseller who was ashamed of his name should have a book of his to publish. The reply of the latter was, that he had some reputation to lose, if Mr. Annet had none; and wishing him good morning, left the self-willed author to find another purchaser.

Lloyd, the poet, who adds another to the list of those known as much for their irregularities as their genius, was likewise among his acquaintance: it is said to have commenced in an unusual manner,—whether previous to the criticism on Nash's life is doubtful; but the term “good-natured editor”



used in it implied sufficient knowledge of his person or character. The story was told by Mr. Cooke, and warrants the propriety of the appellation used by Lloyd as to his easiness of temper.

While sitting in the Chapter Coffee-house, Goldsmith, who had been recently ill, was accosted by a stranger with inquiries after his health ; and evincing the surprise and hesitation natural on the occasion, the inquirer proceeded to introduce himself. "You will pardon my abruptness ; my name is Lloyd ; you are Dr. Goldsmith : as literary men, familiar to each other by name, we ought to be acquainted ; and as I have a few friends to supper here this evening, let me have the pleasure of your company likewise without further ceremony." The frankness of the invitation to a man of social propensities, insured its acceptance : he joined the party composed chiefly of authors, spent an agreeable evening, but when about to depart overheard a discussion between his new friend and the landlord, who seemed perfectly known to each other, implying that the one could not at that moment pay the reckoning while the other declined to give credit. The generosity of Goldsmith obviated the difficulty by guaranteeing the debt which eventually he paid, Lloyd who had long lived by shifts and expedients caring nothing further about the matter.

Another deception alleged to have been practised upon him is of a date shortly anterior to this : it is told by Sir John Hawkins, who viewed

the Poet as he did Burke, with no favourable eye; and even if true, indicates rather simplicity of character, a good-natured acquiescence in what he did not stop to examine, or a degree of delicacy in charging ignorance or imposture upon the supposed musician, than total ignorance of the matter in discussion. We may at least question the correctness of the story in the way he tells it. That Goldsmith had some though possibly slight knowledge of music is certain. Few persons of any education blow the flute for a series of years without knowing a single note; and it would only require an acquaintance with the first half dozen in the stave, to perceive the imposition attempted by his facetious acquaintance. Another reason for doubt applies to time. Roubiliac died after an illness of some duration, early in January 1762; the occurrence therefore must have taken place, if at all, some months previously, when Goldsmith was perhaps scarcely of consequence enough to be made the subject of ridicule, or to have it remembered of him nearly thirty years afterward, when the alleged author of the trick had so long quitted the scene.

“ But in truth,” writes Sir John, in allusion to the performance of the Poet on the German flute, “ he understood not the character in which music is written, and played on that instrument, as many of the vulgar do, merely by ear. Roubiliac, the sculptor, a merry fellow, once heard him play, and minding to put a trick upon him, pretended to be

charmed with his performance, as also that himself was skilled in the art, and entreated him to repeat the air, that he might write it down. Goldsmith readily consenting, Roubiliac called for paper, and scored thereon a few five-line staves, which having done, Goldsmith proceeded to play, and Roubiliac to write ; but his writing was only such random notes on the lines and spaces as any one might set down who had ever inspected a page of music. When they had both done, Roubiliac showed the paper to Goldsmith, who, looking it over with seeming great attention, said it was very correct, and that if he had not seen him do it, he never could have believed his friend capable of writing music after him."

## CHAP. XII.

BOSWELL.—RESIDENCE OF GOLDSMITH AT ISLINGTON, AND  
CONNECTION WITH NEWBERRY.

ABOUT this period he first became acquainted with Mr. Boswell; an observer, whose representations having had some influence in giving an erroneous idea of the character of the subject of these pages, their intercourse requires to be noticed more in detail.

He had just arrived from Scotland, warm with the design of seeking the society of the first wits of the metropolis; and had already, as he tells us, found access to Wilkes, Churchill, Thornton, Lloyd, and others. His chief object of pursuit, however, was Dr. Johnson. Before this introduction could be successfully accomplished, he met Goldsmith, one of their earliest interviews being at dinner with Mr. Thomas Davies, the bookseller, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, toward the end of 1762 or commencement of the following year. Mr. Robert Dodsley was of the party; and a discussion arising relative to the character of modern poetry, Goldsmith asserted that there was none, that is, none of superior merit, of that age. Dodsley appealed to his Collection (the well-known work in six volumes) for proofs to the con-

trary, maintaining, in his phrase, that though no palaces could be pointed out, such as Dryden's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, there were villages composed of very pretty houses, and instanced particularly the poem of "The Spleen." Johnson, on hearing of the argument, gave it against Dodsley. "He and Goldsmith said the same thing," was his remark, "only he said it in a softer manner than Goldsmith did; for he acknowledged there was no poetry, nothing that towered above the common mark."

Whether Boswell took part in the conversation does not appear; but from his love of talking, his youthful presumption, his desire on all occasions to exhibit such knowledge as he possessed, and the popular nature of the topic, we may readily believe he was not silent; and boasting as he did of the acquaintance of Churchill and his friends, he may have been induced to retail their opinions on such subjects, and uphold their claims to superiority. To this school of poetry, which had satire chiefly for its object, Goldsmith felt and expressed strong repugnance: he neither practised nor approved it; and if he were tempted to show how defective the taste or erroneous the judgment of its admirers, would probably have used little ceremony toward a presumptuous young man, such as his new Scottish acquaintance would appear, possessed of no known pretensions to learning, genius, knowledge, literature, or experience in life. He could not be

supposed to discover in such a person, one who was destined eventually to sit in judgment upon his character, and become, with a few persons not remarkable for critical taste, in some measure an arbiter of his fame. He would not have believed, even when Boswell became more known, that his opinions of literary merit could have weight with tolerable judges, even if his personal civilities were insincere; or that the biography of his friend Johnson (if he ever positively knew who was to be biographer) should be rendered the medium of what resembles a species of covert hostility towards himself.

Boswell, from the first, seems to have viewed him with no favourable eye; a tone of slight, meant to undervalue his powers, mingled indeed with a few sentences of regard, or a compliment to his generous and social qualities, runs through his work, and has often drawn animadversion from the higher order of literary men, who have all expressed their sense of its injustice. Conjectures have been hazarded as to the cause, but the motives probably were various; springing from a thousand trifling sources, none singly of material importance, though together sufficient to create distaste in an intercourse which seems never to have reached the point of absolute friendship.

Jealousy of the regard of Johnson formed no doubt one of the chief reasons; a feeling which had not ceased to operate when there was no longer cause for apprehension. Viewing the great



moralist as a kind of property which others would descend to the same obsequiousness as himself to secure, Boswell scarcely believed there were a class of men who, from higher spirit or the higher place they held in public esteem, shrunk from submissions that no private man, however eminent or estimable, had a right to exact, but which it suited his views or disposition to render. Wanting a strong tone of independence of mind himself, he made little allowance for its existence in others. He fancied, therefore, a dangerous rival in Goldsmith; a man of various genius, who stood high in esteem with the object of their common solicitude, who was much in his society, and who having no domestic ties requiring his presence, might be supposed to pay him a less divided attention. On the other hand, Goldsmith thought, and there is no doubt expressed to several common friends, that Johnson gave too much of his time to Boswell, who he considered had no claim to it, either by high conversational powers, or the possession of acknowledged literary talents.

The querulous feeling of the biographer breaks out without concealment in the following amusing instance, and it marks likewise his presumption; for having at this time a very slight acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, he had no claim for admission to his moments of privacy, or just cause to envy another, who from previous intimacy enjoyed this mark of favour. They had been supping together (July 1st, 1763,) at the Mitre, when Johnson, who often thus

inverted the usual order of repasts, quitted the tavern to drink tea with Miss Williams, his blind pensioner, without inviting Boswell to join the party. "Dr. Goldsmith," says the latter, "being a privileged man, went with him this night, strutting away and calling to me with an air of superiority like that of an esoterick over that of an exoterick disciple of a sage of antiquity, 'I go to Miss Williams.' I confess I then envied him this mighty privilege, of which he seemed so proud; but it was not long before I obtained the same mark of distinction."

The period at which they met, and the relative situation of the parties, may have had weight in abating the admiration of Boswell for his Irish acquaintance. Young at the time, well born, with a high opinion of himself, and with a competent inheritance, he found the latter on their first meeting merely an author, possessing no distinguishing superiority, or who at least had not reached that point of celebrity which he felt bound to worship; he saw him, indeed, emerge speedily into notice, ascend every year higher in estimation, and at length attain the first reputation; but the merit which he had failed at first to discover he appeared scarcely ever after freely to admit.

There are persons willing to render homage to such as are already at the summit of fame, who cannot extend the same degree of applause to those who acquire it under their eye, and whose pro-

gress they have had the means of tracing step by step. We frequently see men who rise from obscurity to eminence little thought of by those who started in life as their equals ; the privations, trials, and difficulties of the ascent, far from enhancing their merit in the eyes of such, seem to diminish it, or if admitted, it is with sundry deductions and qualifications. We seem to like to have our admiration taken by surprise. A meridian sun overpowers many with its splendour, who perceive little in the subdued beauty of its rise.

The mind of Boswell, obviously not of the most delicate or disinterested texture, influenced his conduct and opinions. In spirit he was, and aimed to be, a man of the world. In Goldsmith he saw qualities of an opposite kind, a thoughtlessness in discourse not uncommon with men of original powers\*, an occasional effusion of vanity, oddities of conduct or address, and a simplicity of character, which as varying from the conventional standard,

\* Mr. D'Israeli has happily touched on this frequent characteristic of the race of which he treats :—

“ One peculiar trait in the conversations of men of genius which has often injured them when the listeners were not intimately acquainted with the man, are certain sports of a vacant mind ; a sudden impulse to throw out opinions and take views of things in some humour of the moment. Extravagant paradoxes and false opinions are caught up by the humbler proser ; and the Philistines are thus enabled to triumph over the strong and gifted man, because in the hour of confidence, and in the abandonment of the mind, he laid his head in their lap, and taught them how he might be shorn of his strength.”—*The Literary Character illustrated*, pp. 120, 121, 8vo. 1818.

he thought denoted a degree of inferiority. On no better foundation than this, men hackneyed in the ways of life often assume superiority over the recluse scholar, with whom in genius or acquirements they admit of no comparison. Peculiarities floating upon the surface of character they keenly see; qualities which command sincere admiration may lie beneath, but they have neither taste for the search, nor disposition to value them when found. There is no severer, or more unfit judge of a man of genius than what is called a man of the world.

Another cause of distaste towards Goldsmith is conjectured to have been envy of his literary success. As this usually implies a degree of rivalry in the same spirit, it is difficult to conceive how Boswell could so far mistake his own powers; but the notice of Johnson, a general acquaintance with men who had acquired eminence by the cultivation of letters, the success of his volume on *Cor-sica*, impressed the belief as the tone of his writings prove, that he was fitted if he thought proper, to take a respectable station in literature. 'Traces of discontent at the popularity of the author of the *Traveller* appear in various parts of his book,—as on his return from the Continent, when surprise is expressed at finding him stand so high; but the disposition to find fault would seem to have preceded even this period. On the third or fourth interview only (June 25th, 1763,) with Dr. Johnson, a conversation occurred respecting Goldsmith,

in which the former states his opinion, even then, of the promising literary character of his friend, and glances not less forcibly at his foibles. We are not told what led to the observations; but from the context it is difficult not to believe they were made in reply to comments of an unfavourable kind proceeding from Boswell:—“Dr. Goldsmith,” said the moralist, “is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right.”

In the tour to the Hebrides many years afterwards, an anecdote transpires, which seems as if he had been brooding over the fame of Goldsmith in no friendly mood, deeming it lightly acquired, or not wholly deserved. After parting with some military officers, and remarking how little of fame or money the majority acquired by service, he introduces the Poet's name in the following manner, though unconnected with the persons or subject before them:—“BOSWELL. Goldsmith has acquired more fame than all the officers last war who were not generals. JOHNSON. Why, Sir, you will find ten thousand fit to do what they did, before you find one who does what Goldsmith has done. You must consider that a thing is valued according to its rarity. A pebble that paves the street is in itself more useful than the diamond upon a lady's finger.”

Apprehension of superseding him in the office of biographer formed at one period no doubt a cause

of jealousy; for having early appropriated this character to himself, all who dared to intrude upon it were viewed with distrust and aversion. He never forgave, as his pages evince, the partial intrusion upon what he deemed his province, by Sir John Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi. When the latter, as Mrs. Thrale, inquired of Johnson who was likely to be his biographer, and suggested Goldsmith, the reply was that he no doubt would do it best. Such an intimation conveyed to Boswell was sufficient to sour his constitutional good humour; for he doubtless heard of what, among the friends of Johnson, was likely to form an occasional subject of discussion.

To these causes of dissatisfaction may be added the probable knowledge that Goldsmith thought lightly of certain points of his character as well as of his literary pretensions. Mr. Wilkes shortly after the publication of the biography of Dr. Johnson, told several anecdotes of the latter during a convivial evening spent in the house of an alderman in the city, in the course of which Boswell's name frequently occurred. Some one sitting near, and thinking probably to gratify the distaste of the once fiery patriot to the natives of Scotland, observed that the biographer had shown himself by his own account "a sneaking Scotchman." "I do not think so badly of Boswell," replied Wilkes: "he can be an honest fellow. Goldsmith's description of him was the best. Some one under momentary irritation, I forget now on what occa-



sion, called him a 'Scotch cur.' 'No, no,' replied Goldsmith playing upon the word, 'you are too severe; he is merely a Scotch *bur*.\* Tom Davies threw him at Johnson in sport, and he has the faculty of *sticking*.'†

Wilkes likewise said on this and on other occasions, that he had heard Goldsmith treat Boswell's opinions on literary matters in conversation very cavalierly, and frequently over-rule them. The same remark was made by the late Mr. English, who is believed to have had it from Burke with whom he was in frequent communication; on one occasion particularly, in discussing a question connected with old English ballad poetry, Goldsmith told him "he knew nothing about it." It will hereafter be seen that he ridiculed some of his verses written for the Edinburgh theatre.

Some degree of offence may have been given by jests upon Scotland. Goldsmith during his sojourn there had not been placed in the best situation for observing the manners of the people; but such peculiarities as he saw, and which he dashed probably like most wits with a portion of caricature in description, furnished matter for several ludicrous stories told not without humour. Boswell, however forced on such occasions to listen to the sarcasms of Johnson, felt indisposed to submit to

\* The prickly head of the burdock.

† Related by the late Mr. Wheble, well known in the city of London by his connexion with the press and struggle with the House of Commons during the mayoralty of Wilkes.

the wit of Goldsmith ; and in his volumes alludes to these attacks in a spirit akin to ill humour not usual with him.

When we examine the passages in the Life of Johnson, where the biographer, noticing the Irish poet, gives us his own opinion of him, little difficulty will be found in furnishing an answer where specific censure is advanced.

“ No man,” says Boswell, “ had the art of displaying with more advantage as a writer whatever literary acquisitions he made. ‘ *Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit.*’ His mind resembled a fertile but thin soil. There was a quick but not a strong vegetation of whatever chanced to be thrown upon it. No deep root could be struck. The oak of the forest did not grow there ; but the elegant shrubbery and the fragrant parterre appeared in gay succession.”

Vague and metaphorical depreciation such as this, whether his own or borrowed, as is supposed, from the phraseology of Johnson, means any thing or nothing at the pleasure of the writer ; it imparts no definite idea of him whom it attempts to describe ; conveys no estimate of the character of his productions, of his excellencies or defects ; of the nature, variety, or use made of his intellectual powers : omit the name of Goldsmith, and similar terms may apply with as much propriety to most of our poets. If it be meant that he was not so profound a thinker as Bacon or Locke, we shall be compelled to admit the same of Dryden, Pope,

Addison, Gray, Collins, and many more of the same order ; of most of our dramatists, all our novelists, and in short, of the writers of all works of imagination. Of them and of him we can alone judge by what they attempted. If want of moral depth, or deficient acquaintance with human nature, be laid to his charge, every reader may rebut the charge in a moment by turning to almost any page of his works, and pointing out passages and thoughts exhibiting acute, various, and profound observation. Without such powers, in addition to others, he could scarcely have gained popularity, and assuredly never would have retained it. No product of a "thin soil" can take deep root, as his productions have done, in the affectionate admiration of his countrymen.

The *mind* of an author cannot by any metaphysical refinement be disconnected from the *labours* of his mind. To say therefore that the latter wants strength, as is implied by the terms used, when its *labours* display richness, variety, beauty, and promise as great durability as any similar things of the century, is a contradiction in terms. No ordinary or superficial mind can originate works of fine or strong imagination. Before it can be attempted to underrate Goldsmith, the power and beauty of poetry, of narrative fiction, and of dramatic writing, must be lowered in public opinion. By these standards he is to be tried ; by these fruits we judge of the tree ; or in other words, by the *works* of an author we must judge

of his *mind*. In reply, therefore, to a tone of general disparagement regarding “fertile but thin soils,” we need only inquire how he stands in the opinion of the great body of the people for whom he wrote; and here unanimous approval at once furnishes the answer. We may again ask, Was his sphere of exertion narrow? This can scarcely be said of one who embraced poetry, the drama, fictitious narrative, history, and other subjects. If it be again demanded, How on all these topics has he acquitted himself? Dr. Johnson gives the reply:—“A man,” he says, “of such variety of powers, and of such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing.” To attempt so many departments of literature, and to succeed in no ordinary degree in all, is a merit of which no error or personal prejudice of a critic such as Boswell can deprive him; and which might silence criticism altogether were it not doubtful, from the first clause in the preceding passage, whether this variety and facility in mastering a subject, were not considered by the writer of it not far removed from a fault.

“He was,” continues Boswell in the same spirit, “very much what the French call *un étourdi*; and from vanity, and an eager desire of being conspicuous wherever he was, he frequently talked carelessly, without knowledge of the subject, or even without thought.”

What is here attributed to vanity and the desire of being noticed, Sir Joshua Reynolds explained

from the repeated declarations of the Poet himself, who dwelt warmly on the pleasure of being liked in society, and observed how hard it was that literary reputation should preclude an author, as he had frequently remarked it did in consequence of the envy shown towards such a character, from the social regard enjoyed by other men. From this cause the Painter was convinced that the Poet often intentionally lowered his standard of thought in familiar conversation, trusting to his character being sufficiently supported by his works. Boswell questions the truth of this theory. Between these opinions it will not be difficult which to prefer; the former saw him only by snatches during his visits to London, which were short and necessarily occupied on other matters; while Reynolds, in his own house as a frequent visitor, as well as in company with common friends, kept up constant intercourse for a series of years, and enjoyed more of his confidence and esteem than any other person whatever.

In a long and interesting conversation of the writer of these pages with the late Mr. Northcote a few weeks before his death, he expressed himself of the same opinion as Sir Joshua regarding Goldsmith's assumed playfulness of manners. In illustration of the ease and familiarity he soon produced even among strangers, one of his remarks on this subject, characteristic of his emphatic phraseology, may be given:—"When Goldsmith entered a room, Sir, people who did not know him became for a moment silent from awe of his

literary reputation ; when he came out again, they were riding upon his back."

The remark of the Poet upon the jealousy frequently evinced toward men of eminent literary merit seems based upon close observation of human life, and may be considered the usual tax paid by every species of superiority. Persons who enjoy this distinction must expect to have their demeanour narrowly observed, their pretensions questioned, and every deduction made from the amount of desert that a searching scrutiny can discover ; and this disposition will be too often found, as the charge of Goldsmith in part implied, in their superiors in rank and station. If an example of the truth of his theory were wanting, it was at hand. He saw Dr. Johnson, either from determination not to descend from the customary pre-eminence awarded to him by men of talent, or inability to assume those lighter graces which make their way in gay and fashionable society, practically excluded from extensive intercourse among the higher circles of life ; the philosopher was not disinclined to be received among the titled and the wealthy ; but no serious attempt was made to invite him thither, greatly to the discredit of the policy that neglected so warm an admirer and so powerful an advocate. The pride of talents and the pride of rank were probably thought to be too nearly upon an equality for the latter not to lose something of dignity by frequent social collision ; all his friends and companions



were therefore found among the middling class. He saw indeed and admitted the fact, of Goldsmith whose constitutional temperament was more light and playful than his own, being liked in general society, but attributed it to the idea of those who entertained him believing that on all common matters they were his superiors.

“Those,” continues Boswell, “who were in any way distinguished excited envy in him to so ridiculous an excess, that the instances of it are hardly credible. When accompanying two beautiful young ladies with their mother on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him; and at the exhibition of the *Fantoccini* in London, when those who sat next him observed with what dexterity a puppet was made to toss a pike, he could not bear that it should have such praise, and exclaimed, with some warmth, ‘Pshaw! I can do it better myself.’”

Whatever jealousy Goldsmith may have at any time exhibited, the instances here adduced are both, as will be hereafter seen, *untrue*: they are contradicted by parties who were present; and the former by an authority about which there can be no mistake, namely, by the lady chiefly concerned who has stated it in person to the present writer. Boswell, not disinclined to listen to misrepresentations of one who did not stand high in his favour, gave credence to stories which being copied by every subsequent memoir-writer, have

obtained a currency their improbability did not deserve. They were first, it appears, propounded as jests, a species of wit to which the Poet was frequently subjected, and assumed by repetition and the usual exaggeration attending it, something like the semblance of truth. Such anecdotes, told at first with the view of creating a laugh, become the means of permanent injury, where none feel particularly interested in examining into their correctness; and may long remain from this cause, as in the present instance, uncontradicted.

Were the judgment of Boswell merely in fault in the remarks he makes or the stories he records of an old acquaintance, that of Dr. Johnson, so frequently and forcibly expressed, and to which he deferred on most other occasions, was always before him to correct an erroneous impression. In vain was it repeatedly said by the latter, that "Goldsmith was a very great man;" or that "Goldsmith was a man who whatever he wrote did it better than any other man could do. He deserved a place in Westminster Abbey; and every year he lived he would have deserved it better." Or again, "Take him as a poet, his *Traveller* is a very fine performance; ay, and so is his *Deserted Village*, were it not sometimes too much the echo of his *Traveller*. Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet,—as a comic writer,—or as an historian,—he stands in the first class."

These and similar commendations which the biographer repeats without venturing to question

their justice, pass from his pen in silence : he never joins in the praise, excepting by making an occasional admission that "his affections were social and generous, and when he had money he gave it liberally." He likewise confesses that though the Irish poet was prone to talk carelessly and without sufficient knowledge of the subject, his reputed absurdities in conversation were exaggerated ; an impression that will occur to every reader of works in which his name or conversation is mentioned, where so far from finding absurdity, all the specimens given us display a ready wit, pertinent observation, or such remarks as allowably fall from any one in the unreserved intercourse of private life.

When the publication of Johnson's Life set the surviving friends and admirers of Goldsmith on their defence, Lord Charlemont, always moderate in his sentiments, expressed his wonder how Boswell could make the mistake of undervaluing a writer of such unquestionable genius and popularity. Burke, in conversation with the beautiful Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Crewe, concluded some pointed animadversions with the remark, "What rational opinion, my dear madam, could you expect a lawyer to give of a poet?" Wilkes, who may have heard of this, improved upon it with his usual vivacity on the occasion of the city dinner mentioned in a preceding page :—"A Scotch lawyer and an Irish poet I hold to be about as opposite as the antipodes ; if they agreed in any thing, I

should marvel much, and least of all in forming a favourable opinion of each other." Sir Joshua Reynolds expressed dissent from Boswell's opinions even before the work appeared in print, plainly intimating to him in conversation that he ought to take a more favourable view of the character of their departed acquaintance than by what fell from him in private it was obvious he intended. George Steevens, on the same subject, once observed, in his usual sarcastic spirit, "Why, Sir, it is not usual for a man who has much genius to be censured by one who has none." Bishop Percy frequently in private, complained of the injustice done to his former friend. Malone, who had afterwards to edit the work in which it appeared, felt and expressed the same opinion strongly, and thus communicates it in a letter to that prelate now before the writer, dated Queen Ann Street, September 25th, 1807. The interpolations to which allusion is made were introduced into the memoir of Goldsmith by, as it was said, the editor employed by the publishers after they had quarrelled with the Bishop.

"I can myself, from personal knowledge, bear witness to the truth of your character of him (Goldsmith), for I never observed any of those grimaces or fooleries that the interpolator talks of; nor could I ever assent to Lord Orford's pointed sentence, that he was 'an inspired idiot,' which was said and circulated merely for the sake of the point, without any regard to just representation.

I always made battle against Boswell's representation of him also in the *Life of Johnson*; and often expressed to him my opinion that he rated Goldsmith much too low."\*

Every writer of eminence in adverting to the subject has arrived at a similar conclusion. "I wonder," says Sir Walter Scott, "why Boswell so often displays a malevolent feeling towards Goldsmith. Rivalry for Johnson's good graces, perhaps?"† Mr. Croker and others who have examined the subject seem to agree in this inference; and in the conversation of literary circles the same language is universally held. A distinguished political and literary character thus expresses himself in a letter to the writer:—"Boswell, I think, treats poor Goldy hardly. He was, perhaps, like some others of us Irish, occasionally in the habit of talking idly, but he had brilliant talents and a good heart; a better one, I take it, than Johnson's."

The character of Boswell himself, as furnishing some clew to his conduct and sentiments, cannot be passed without notice. If Johnson has been called to account for his prejudices against one popular poet (Gray), his biographer is as open to remark for unfair comments upon another.

We find it tinged with peculiarities which have been a source of alternate conjecture and surprise

\* MS. correspondence in possession of Mr. Mason.

† Mr. Croker's edition of Boswell.

to all who have written about, and nearly all who have read him; for he stands in the very unusual predicament of having given birth to one of the most amusing and in some respects instructive books in our language, without winning from the reader corresponding respect for its author. While the former, therefore, is sought and perused with eager curiosity and satisfaction, invective and ridicule, terms the most contemptuous and bitter have been applied to his personal conduct and qualities.\* Literary men more particularly have been severe in their judgments, as if the want of spirit and independence of mind shown by one who claimed to be enrolled in their order, had in his intercourse with the great moralist in some measure compromised its honour. Other classes of readers, who fix their attention upon the book and care nothing for the character of the writer, deem this asperity excessive or undeserved, and not unnaturally perhaps, give their sympathy and regard to one who, whatever his defects, has contributed so much to their entertainment.

It may be true that he was not a high-minded man, but this did not necessarily unfit him for the office he undertook. Possessed of considerable talent, industry, and observation, he yet conveys no impression of enjoying an enlarged or vigorous understanding. Frequently vain and credulous, inquisitive and communicative, bustling and occa-

\* *Edinburgh Review*.—Notice of the last edition of Boswell.



sionally assuming, he seems to have been one of those persons seen in the mixed societies of a great metropolis who are sometimes amusing by their gossip, and sometimes annoying by their intrusion ; who are endured more than sought ; who without pretension to notice from their own merits, make it a pursuit to know and to talk to all who are so, and from the familiarity thus assumed or granted, at length seem to believe that they have reflected back upon them part of the distinction belonging to their eminent acquaintance. His peculiarities are often contradictory : we are in doubt whether sense or folly, simplicity or cunning, a degree of pride sometimes amusing, or a spirit of adulation almost servile, predominate in the picture he has left of himself. If we find in him occasional selfishness, there is likewise a devotion toward the great man whom he worshipped approaching to generosity ; a determination never thought derogatory to submit to humiliating rebuffs and caustic reprehensions with a patience more than philosophical. Mingled with this there was much real kindness in trying to cheer the solitary hours of his friend who sought society from the relief thence afforded to a mind often affected by morbid melancholy, and who had no domestic companion to bestow it ; he further felt probably, that this kind feeling formed his chief claim to attention from the philosopher ; and that having intruded upon him at first with no slight degree of intrepidity as being young, unknown, and without

claim to such an honour, and continued it by perseverance, submission could alone enable him to retain hold upon his affection. He was proud, and not unreasonably so, of being known as an attached friend of the first literary man of the age ; but jealous to excess of others who enjoyed an honour which he seemed to think ought to be exclusively his own.

A passion for notoriety, or mistaken idea of his consequence when no grounds existed on which to expect it, was soon obvious in his character. Thus, so early as 1766 and a few succeeding years, his arrivals in London and occasional movements in its vicinity, are announced in newspaper paragraphs, originating no doubt with himself. To this passion may be owing in part the first effort to seek out Johnson ; to this likewise his officious attendance upon, or patronage as it was called, of General Paoli, which he or his friends took care to announce frequently in the daily journals\* ;

\* The following are selected from others :—

“ When Mr. Boswell was presented to the General de Paoli he paid this compliment to the Corsicans :—“ Sir, I am upon my travels, and have lately visited Rome : I am come from seeing the ruins of one brave and free people, to see the rise of another.”—*Lloyd's Evening Post*, Jan. 10—13. 1766.

“ James Boswell, Esq. is expected in town.”—*Public Advertiser*, Feb. 28, 1768.

“ Yesterday James Boswell, Esq. arrived from Scotland at his lodgings in Half-Moon Street, Piccadilly.”—*Ibid.* March 24. 1768.

In December he advertised a memorial, in order to raise a subscription for the Corsicans.

while as a sort of appendage to the train of the Corsican patriot, he secured an introduction to such persons of rank and talent as sought out the former in consequence of being a novel object of attraction. To the ridicule incurred in society by these little attendances and assumptions of public importance he was nearly insensible. Gratified with attention himself, he thought it allowable to administer to the vanity of others; and seemed not to know that a certain degree of moral dignity was lost by the open flattery of any man however great his talents or station. Yet his worldly speculations, though aided by this engine, and

“By special permission of his Excellency Paoli, Boswell’s Account of Corsica. 2nd edition.”—*Public Advertiser*, Jan. 1769.

“Extract of a letter from Dublin, June 8 :—

“James Boswell, Esq. having now visited Ireland, he dined with his Grace the Duke of Leinster at his country seat at Cartown. He also went by special invitation to visit the Lord Lieutenant at his country seat at Leixlip, to which he was conducted in one of his Excellency’s coaches by Lieutenant Colonel Walsh. He dined there and staid all night, and next morning came in the coach with his Excellency to the Phoenix Park, and was present at a review of Sir Joseph York’s dragoons. He also dined with the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor at the mayoralty. He is now set out on his return to Scotland.”—*Ibid.* July 7.

Spoke verses at the Jubilee in the character of a Corsican, Sep. 6., on which many jests were passed at the time.

“On Sunday last, General Paoli, accompanied by James Boswell, Esq., took an airing in Hyde Park in his coach. His Excellency came out and took an airing by the Serpentine river, and through Kensington Gardens, with which he seemed very much pleased.”—*Ibid.* Oct. 4.

that he meant it as a mode of advancement there is no doubt, failed; he did not succeed at the English bar: Fox and Burke, whom he praised, and probably loved, had nothing to give; and Mr. Pitt, in whose praise he composed and sung a fulsome ballad at a city dinner in his presence, was not to be won by such means; nothing was rendered by the minister in return for his admiration or adulation, and the neglect pained and irritated him.

The same love of being known made him a talker, but with so little success, that Topham Beauclerk jocularly threatened Lord Charlemont then in Ireland, if he would not come to London, to send "Boswell to talk to him." Of his powers of mind, Johnson for the first ten years of their acquaintance appears to have entertained a poor opinion. Writing to Mrs. Thrale from Scotland on the conclusion of the tour in that country, he says, (November 3d, 1773,) "Boswell will praise my resolution and perseverance, and I shall in return celebrate his good-humour and cheerfulness. *He has better faculties than I had imagined; more justness of discernment, and more fecundity of images.*" No surprise need be entertained at his partiality for one of whose understanding he may have previously thought lightly; for it is not necessary to admire the intellect of all whom we nevertheless cordially love. The philosopher was flattered no doubt by the complimentary language of his companion, but more by his per-

sonal attachment, and the trouble taken on all occasions for his amusement. He was further pleased by the rather unusual occurrence of being courted for the sake of his wisdom and learning by one so much younger than himself, instead of being shunned as age and wisdom commonly are, by the youthful and giddy; and this he probably deemed a forcible tribute to his own merit on the one part, and an evidence of the good sense at least of his acquaintance on the other. He felt likewise what no doubt had its effect, that this regard and admiration proceeded from a person of education, of ancient family, of competent fortune, and respectably known in his native country, who whatever might be his talents, deserved praise for several good private qualities.

For these proofs of attachment and kindness to one who has so many claims on our regard as Johnson, if we cannot altogether respect Boswell, it is difficult to dislike him. He was good-humoured, free from malignity, and excepting where some jealousy or prejudice interfered, and for which he may have thought he had sufficient reason, seldom unjust to those of whom he had occasion to speak. His social propensities were well known, and a contemporary, Mr. Courtenay, thus laments his absence:—

“No Boswell joys o’er wine.”

Want of candour is rarely among his defects. On the contrary, he opens his mind so freely, that

we discover much of what is passing there even possibly when such disclosure was not meant; for had he been conscious of the light in which we are often obliged to view him, it is difficult to believe he would not have shown more caution, although at the expense of a portion of the interest attached to his book. Some reserve however is necessary with all human creatures: it is seldom safe to unveil the whole mind, to make society the depository of *all* our thoughts; men cannot safely make this disclosure, and on the other hand we ought not on all occasions to listen to it, or at least to hear the confession with forbearance: the world is a thankless confidant, and a severe censor.

One of his accusations against Goldsmith is imitation of the dress and manner of Johnson, yet he was himself so notorious for this serious mimicry as to be the object of general remark. Gifford, in the *Mæviad*, more severely than the facts warrant, adverts to this peculiarity and to his general character:—

“ And Boswell, aping with preposterous pride  
Johnson’s worst frailties, rolls from side to side;  
His heavy head from hour to hour erects;  
Affects the fool, and is what he affects.”

A more minute description of his appearance has been given by a lady, whose early talents and celebrity made her a favourite with Johnson, and in consequence almost a source of jealousy to his biographer when they met in general society. “ He had,” says Madame D’Arblay, “ an odd



mock solemnity of tone and manner, that he had acquired imperceptibly from constantly thinking of and imitating Dr. Johnson, whose own solemnity, nevertheless far from mock, was the result of pensive rumination. There was also something slouching in the gait and dress of Mr. Boswell, that wore an air ridiculously enough of purporting to personify the same model. His clothes were always too large for him; his hair or wig was constantly in a state of negligence; and he never for a moment sat still or upright on a chair. Every look and movement displayed either intentional or involuntary imitation.”\*

The nature of his book has not escaped censure nearly as severe as that directed against the character of its author. Breach of hospitality, and violation of the implied laws of society which make it an offence to repeat conversations never meant or expected to extend beyond the circle in which they were uttered, have been urged against him, and harsh names in consequence applied, such as talebearer, eavesdropper, and others not less offensive.† All this is unjust. No harm is known

\* *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, vol. ii. p. 191.

† In preparing his work for the press, a laudable desire to give his authorities appears in the following extract of a letter to Bishop Percy, April 9, 1790, from the MS. collection of Mr. Mason. The Bishop, as in the instance of the edition of Goldsmith, hesitated to give his name or authority to any production not ecclesiastical, and did not in fact interest himself seriously on other subjects.

“As to suppressing your Lordship’s name, when relating the very few anecdotes of Johnson with which you have favoured

to have accrued from what he reveals, though personal vanity may have been wounded, or folly occasionally exposed by the retorts being recorded which they provoked from the sarcastic spirit of Johnson. But it may be asked in return whether the miscellaneous society of a London dinner-table, discussing every topic that chance flings before the members, be one which is strictly private, or whether persons acquire the right to utter nonsense there, more than at other places, with impunity? To a man of known talents, the defeats or reproofs he may meet with on such occasions, tell little against him; and if others of inferior reputation venture to risk absurdities in

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me, I will do any thing to oblige your Lordship but that very thing. I owe to the authenticity of my work, to its respectability, and to the credit of my illustrious friend, to introduce the names of as many eminent persons as I can. It is comparatively a very small portion which is sanctioned by that of your Lordship, and there is nothing even bordering on impropriety. Believe me, my Lord, you are not the only bishop in the number of great men with which my pages are graced. I am quite resolute as to this matter.

“Pray who is it that has the charge of Goldsmith’s works here? I should like to talk with him. I know not where the plan of his *Encyclopædia* is, or if it be preserved.

“Our amiable friend Sir Joshua Reynolds has received from the Empress of Russia the present of a very fine gold snuff-box, beautifully enamelled with her head on the lid, set round with five-and-thirty capital diamonds. Within it is a slip of paper on which are written in her own hand these words — I think I recollect them exactly :—“*Pour le Chevalier Reynolds, en témoignage du contentement que j’ai ressenti de ses excellens Discours sur la Peinture.*”

sentiment or opinion, they should have fortitude enough to submit to the punishment. After all the storm of reproach vented against Boswell for alleged social treachery, who does not read the work with avidity, and has not gained from it instruction and delight? And who for a moment wishes, notwithstanding some erroneous and prejudiced views, that it had never appeared?

The indifferent figure which he permits himself to make in his own picture, though a source it is said of extreme mortification to the pride of his relatives, forms a guarantee of the general honesty of his reports. Statements of numerous conversations, we are aware, cannot be always either accurate or full: the omission of an extenuating word or circumstance, or the introduction of a different term from that used at the moment, may impart a colouring to a discussion or story which the original circumstances did not warrant. In the dialogues with Johnson, some of the speakers probably have not had justice, or but imperfect justice, done them. Many omissions must necessarily have occurred under the circumstances in which the notes were taken; and he avows suppressions, the publication of which would have given offence, some of which it is believed bore as hardly upon himself as upon others. But on the whole, he may be considered as giving us the purport, if not words, as nearly as circumstances permitted, and therefore what he represents as coming under his own observation we may believe.

We are not required to place similar confidence in what he gleans from others, or to allow much weight to his mere opinions. To Goldsmith he is, as we see, unjust; to Sir John Hawkins, though not an amiable man, and to Mrs. Piozzi, he is almost hostile; to a few others likewise, less liberal than might be wished. Yet as his representations are sometimes quoted in estimating characters of the past age, we have an exemplification of what every one must have found in their experience of the world, the different degrees of deference paid to dead and to living testimony. Many a statesman who has declaimed in Parliament for years without carrying a motion, or almost winning a vote, is often quoted after death as an authority even by surviving opponents, on points of political faith and practice. So the notions of Boswell upon literary men and merit, which would have commanded little attention from his contemporaries, receive by being disseminated in a popular book, a degree of attention denied personally to the writer.\*

\* The correspondence of Hannah More furnishes a few characteristic notices of Boswell. At a dinner at Bishop Shipley's in 1781, where were Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gibbon, Langton, Lords Spencer and Althorp, one of his infirmities is alluded to, and in terms that render it almost doubtful whether the subject of his address to her on the occasion was not *amatory*.

"I was heartily disgusted with Mr. Boswell, who came up stairs after dinner much disordered with wine, and addressed me in a manner which drew from me a sharp rebuke, for which I fancy he will not easily forgive me."

It appears likewise, that besides being a habitual imitator of

London was now exchanged by Goldsmith for a country residence. With a view to health, and perhaps to be near Newbery, for whom his pen was chiefly employed, and who resided at Canonbury House, Islington, he removed to that neighbourhood to board and lodge in the house of a Mrs. Elizabeth Fleming, at the conclusion of the year 1762.

The sum stipulated for this accommodation was fifty pounds per annum, at that period equal to double the amount now, which the publisher as his usual cash-bearer paid quarterly, taking credit for such payments in the settlement of their accounts. This arrangement, dictated probably as much by his late illness alluded to in the note respecting Plutarch, as present convenience, Sir John Hawkins in his usual spirit attributes to a

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the manner of Johnson, sometimes perhaps unconsciously, he could play the amusing mimic by design. At a party at Mrs. Vesey's she writes—"Boswell brought to my mind the whole of a very mirthful conversation at dear Mrs. Garrick's, and my being made by Sir William Forbes the umpire in a trial of skill between Garrick and Boswell which could most nearly imitate Dr. Johnson's manner. I remember I gave it for Boswell in familiar conversation, and for Garrick in reciting poetry."

In 1785 she writes—the book alluded to being no doubt the *Tour to the Hebrides*:—"Boswell tells me he is printing *anecdotes* of Johnson; not his *life*, but as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*. I besought his tenderness for our virtuous and most revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of his asperities. He said roughly, 'He would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat, to please any one.' It will, I doubt not, be a very amusing book, but I hope not an indiscreet one: he has great enthusiasm, and some fire."

different cause. "Of the booksellers," writes that gentleman, "whom he styled his friends, Mr. Newbery was one. This person had apartments at Canonbury House, where Goldsmith often lay concealed from his creditors. Under a pressing necessity, he there wrote his *Vicar of Wakefield*, and for it received of Newbery forty pounds."

His removal thither took place probably about Christmas; for by the following account rendered in the course of the year, it appears that the first quarterly payment was made on the 24th of March. In a rough copy of this account still preserved, the payments to Mrs. Fleming are specifically noted to be for "a quarter's board," the difference between the sum due (12*l.* 10*s.*) and that which was paid in March, June, and October, as seen subjoined, being incidental expenses. Several books supplied to him are likewise set down; as "Three sets of *Chinese Letters*," "*Annual Register*," 4 vols., "the same half bound," "*Smollett's Continuation*," &c., "*Reading's Life of Christ*," and "*Nollet's Physics*." The account is otherwise of some interest, as disclosing the extent and frequency of his obligations to Newbery.

		" Doctor Goldsmith		Dr. to John Newbery.				
1761.	Oct. 14.	1 set of the Idler	-	-	-	£0	5	0
1762.	Nov. 9.	To cash	-	-	-	10	10	0
	Dec. 22.	To ditto	-	-	-	3	3	0
	29.	To ditto	-	-	-	1	1	0
						<hr/>		
		Carried forward	-	-	-	£14	19	0



		Brought forward	-	£14	19	0
1763.	Jan. 22.	To ditto	- - -	-	1	1 0
	25.	To ditto	- - -	-	1	1 0
	Feb. 14.	To ditto	- - -	-	1	1 0
	March 11.	To ditto	- - -	-	2	2 0
	12.	To ditto	- - -	-	1	1 0
	24.	To cash paid Mrs. Fleming	-	-	14	0 0
	30.	To cash	- - -	-	0	10 6
	May 4.	To ditto	- - -	-	2	2 0
	21.	To ditto	- - -	-	3	3 0
	June 3.	To cash paid Mrs. Fleming	-	-	14	11 0
	25.	To cash	- - -	-	2	2 0
	July 1.	To ditto	- - -	-	2	2 0
	20.	To ditto	- - -	-	14	14 0
	Sept. 2.	To ditto	- - -	-	1	1 0
	8.	To cash paid your draft to Wm. } Filby	- - -	-	15	2 0
	10.	To cash	- - -	-	0	10 6
	19.	To ditto	- - -	-	1	1 0
	24.	To ditto	- - -	-	2	2 0
	Oct. 8.	To ditto	- - -	-	2	2 0
	10.	To cash paid your bill to Mrs. } Fleming	- - -	-	14	13 6
				£111	1	6
				By copies of different kinds	-	63 0 0
				£48	1	6

Oct. 11. By note of hand sent and delivered  
up the vouchers."

The lady whose inmate he became, is supposed to be represented in a picture which appeared in the winter exhibition of the works of deceased British artists in 1832. It was named "Goldsmith's Hostess" in the catalogue, and represents an elderly lady in a satin dress, with a Bible open before her: the painter is said to be Hogarth; and the inference thence drawn is, that he was a familiar visitor

of the Poet previous to his death in 1764. The history of the painting is unknown, excepting that it has been forty years in the family of the present proprietor,\* has always been designated among its members by the title it now bears, and was purchased by his father out of, as is believed, the Hyde collection. An etching, supposed to be from the same picture, is said to have been published some years ago.

Here he continued a resident during the whole of 1763 and part of 1764; and as illustrative of his private habits, the following bill of his landlady for the items of expense during a quarter will gratify curiosity. By this he appears to have been fond of sassafras, a decoction of which was then in vogue as an innocent and wholesome beverage, though now chiefly confined to medical purposes. The dinners mentioned without any price affixed were given to visitors of her lodger, who seem introduced in order that the generosity of his hostess towards him and them should not be forgotten. One of these, Dr. Reman as he is called here, was a Dr. William Redmond, an Irish physician, who having resided several years in France where he had been acquainted with the Poet, had come to try his success in England; and professing to have made discoveries in the properties, or what he chose to term the "principles of antimony," had become involved in a

\* Mr. R. Graves.

dispute with some members of the Society of Arts, on which a year or two afterward he published a pamphlet in French.\* To the bill is appended the particulars of the account of his laundress, which it is scarcely necessary to transcribe: the items sufficiently prove that if formerly open to the charge of neglecting his linen, it could not now justly be brought against him.

“ 1763.		Doctor Goldsmith		Dr. to Eliz. Fleming.				
Aug. 22.	A pint of mountain	-	-		£0	1	0	
	A gentleman's dinner	-	-	-	0	0	0	
24.	A bottle of port	-	-	-	0	2	0	
	4 gentlemen's teas	-	-	-	0	1	6	
25.	Dr. Reman's dinner and tea	-	-	-	0	0	0	
Sept. 5.	———— dinner	-	-	-	0	0	0	
7.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0	0	6	
11.	Dr. Reman's dinner	-	-	-	0	0	0	
29.	A bottle of port	-	-	-	0	2	0	
	Mr. Baggott, dinner	-	-	-	0	0	0	
Oct. 8.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0	0	3	
10.	Mr. Baggott, tea	-	-	-	0	0	0	
14.	Paper	-	-	-	0	1	0	
24.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0	0	3	
25.	Paid the newsman	-	-	-	0	16	10½	
30.	Wine and cakes	-	-	-	0	1	6	
31.	To the Rev. Mr. Tyrrell	-	-	-	0	2	6	
	Mr. Baggott, dinner	-	-	-	0	0	0	
	Sassafras	-	-	-	0	0	6	
Carried forward				-	£1	9	10½	

\* “ Imported by T. Becket and P. A. De Hondt, near Surrey Street, in the Strand. Price 1s. 6d. ‘ Essai sur les Principes de l'Antimoine, par le Dr. Remond; avec une suite de Lettres intéressantes relatives à sa dispute avec la Société des Arts et des Sciences de Londres.’ ”—*Public Advertiser*. Some other notices of him occur in the newspapers of the day.

HIS LANDLADY'S BILL.

463

		Brought forward	-	-	£1	9	10½
Nov. 5.	Ditto	-	-	-	-	0	0 6
	10 sheets of paper	-	-	-	-	0	0 5
8.	Pens	-	-	-	-	0	0 2½
	Paper	-	-	-	-	0	1 0
	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	0	0 6
	To 3 months' board	-	-	-	-	12	10 0
	To shoes-cleaning	-	-	-	-	0	2 6
	To washing	-	-	-	-	0	18 0½
					<hr/>		
					£15	3	0¾
					<hr/>		

Received, Dec. 9, 1763, by the hands of Mr.  
Newbery, the contents in full.

ELIZ. FLEMING.

About the period of his removal thither, he was solicited to join in the "Poetical Calendar," a publication undertaken by the Rev. Mr. Fawkes, translator of several of the Greek minor poets, and Vicar of Orpington, and Mr. Woty, both his acquaintance: the invitation was declined, as is said, from a poor opinion of the poetical powers of his colleagues. The first volume came out in February, 1763, and met with only tolerable success.

## CHAP. XIII.

LITERARY PROJECTS.—BROOKES'S NATURAL HISTORY.—MARTIAL REVIEW.—LITERARY CLUB.—PREFACES AND TRANSLATIONS.—LETTERS FROM A NOBLEMAN TO HIS SON.

It was probably about this period he projected an edition of Pope's works, with a life and notes, containing such illustrative matter as time had made public since the death of that distinguished poet. With this view he addressed a letter, which was known to be in existence a few years afterwards, to Tonson the bookseller in the Strand, detailing the design. But his name being unknown for poetry, and the publisher doubting either his weight in public opinion, his ability, or his diligence, did not deign to return a written answer, but desired a printer to call upon the gentleman in his name and give a verbal negative.

This was at least discourteous ; but as Tonson is represented to have been a good-natured man, we may attribute it rather to inadvertency than intentional insult, and at least believe he would not send an impertinent message whatever he may have thought of the supposed presumption of the proposal : an offensive reply however was delivered ; and the messenger exhibiting other proofs of impertinence, Goldsmith attempted to chastise him ; nor was it till after some violence had taken place

that the combatants were separated. This story first transpired at the period of his assaulting Evans the bookseller, but with aggravations, such as that his adversary being the stronger, succeeded in rolling him in the kennel; the object being to fix upon him the charge of being prone to affrays arising from extreme irritability of temper.

In the spring of the year 1763, about the period of ceasing to write the articles on Belles Lettres formerly mentioned in the British Magazine, he projected a work on biography, for which the cessation of Newbery's compendium on that subject presented as he believed, an opening. The plan and probably part of the materials provided for the former work were submitted to Dodsley, who acceded to the proposal, and the following agreement was drawn up: it is transcribed from the original in the handwriting of Goldsmith, formerly in the possession of Mr. Nicol of Pall Mall, and now the property of Samuel Rogers, Esq., whose politeness in offering the use of it deserves acknowledgment:—

“It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M.B. on one hand, and James Dodsley on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith shall write for James Dodsley a book called a Chronological History of the Lives of Eminent Persons of Great Britain and Ireland, or to that effect, consisting of about two volumes 8vo., about the same size and letter with the Universal History published in 8vo.; for the writing of which and compiling the same, James Dodsley shall pay



Oliver Goldsmith three guineas for every printed sheet, so that the whole shall be delivered complete in the space of two years at farthest; James Dodsley, however, shall print the above work in whatever manner or size he shall think fit, only the Universal History above mentioned shall be the standard by which Oliver Goldsmith shall expect to be paid.

“Oliver Goldsmith shall be paid one moiety upon delivery of the whole copy complete, and the other moiety, one half of it at the conclusion of six months, and the other half at the expiration of the twelve months next after the publication of the work, James Dodsley giving, however, upon the delivery of the whole copy, two notes for the money left unpaid. Each volume of the above intended work shall not contain more than five-and-thirty sheets, and if they should contain more, the surplus shall not be paid for by James Dodsley. Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“JAMES DODSLEY.

“March 31st, 1763.”

How far he proceeded in this undertaking, and why it was relinquished, are unknown. Upon such a subject, and with his powers of composition, we have probably lost by the omission one of the pleasantest books in the language. There were however, to one in his situation some difficulties attending its execution if meant to be a book of authority. Biography, however fascinating a theme,

is not that which an author militant, who is dependent on his daily labour for his daily bread, should choose as a matter of profit. To write a life sometimes requires no inconsiderable portion of a life\*; at least to do it as it should be done when distinguished men are the subjects, minutely and well, to throw all the lights upon it that our engagement tacitly binds us whenever practicable to furnish; it is therefore under favourable circumstances only, as when the materials are all under the eye, or within the immediate knowledge of the writer, that it can be written as a tale or an essay, *currente calamo*. Like history, of which it forms one of the most interesting portions, it should be a work of investigation; for a name, a date, or even a trifling fact, though abstractedly of little importance in itself, may require time and inquiry to authenticate, or if incorrectly given, is likely to create want of confidence in the author. Diligence in research is one of the necessary duties of a biographer, for the want of which genius cannot always compensate. Even Johnson's Lives of the Poets, admirable in all other respects, suffer in our estimation by their occasional deficiency in facts, which a little more time and labour might have supplied, and the want of which as causing a diminution of our pleasure, we may be permitted to regret.

\* Boswell's Life of Johnson, and Middleton's Life of Cicero, the most complete biographies in our language, required a long time for their completion.

A similar objection would no doubt have applied to the lives by Goldsmith : what was simply indolence in Johnson, would in him have been indolence and the pressure of necessity combined. To the older lives he could probably have added little. In those of more recent date something more than every one's memory or library could supply, would have been expected in return for the demand made upon public confidence by two octavo volumes from an accredited writer, and two years was much too short a time for serious or minute inquiry. Yet we are scarcely at liberty to speculate on the probable imperfections of any thing from a writer whose pen contained a charm able to compensate for obvious disadvantages. And if upon the subject of natural history, of which he knew practically little he has written a book which with all its faults has been almost the only one consulted by general readers for sixty years past, what might not have been expected from his labours in biography ?

Two publications of Newbery about this period, "Description of Millennium Hall," the supposed seat of a society of ladies in the west of England, in March ; and "The Wonders of Nature and Art, being an Account of what is most curious and remarkable throughout the World," in four volumes, which appeared in May, are supposed to be indebted to his pen for revision, and the latter for some additions to several of the subjects. No

direct evidence of his participation in either appears; and the latter opinion may have originated in his acknowledged powers of furnishing amusement for youth.

With another work of more pretension from the same publisher, his connexion is better established, being employed not only to assist the author, but to revise, to recommend, and to introduce his book to more general favour by a preface and by introductions to the chief subjects which in clearness, spirit, and elegance no writer can hope to excel. The subject was Natural History, and the writer a physician whose name has been long familiar as the compiler of a Gazetteer. The advertisement (July 18th, 1763,) states that the whole of the work is printed off in six thick volumes duodecimo, and that on the 1st of August a volume, to be followed by one every succeeding month till completed, will appear, of

“ A new and accurate System of Natural History: containing, in vol. 1., The History of Quadrupeds; 2. of Birds; 3. of Fishes and Serpents; 4. of Insects; 5. of Mineral Waters; 6. of Vegetables, &c. By R. Brookes, M. D., Author of the General Practice of Physic, &c. &c.” Appended to this announcement in the newspaper is the following persuasive to purchasers, as strongly indicative of the hand of Goldsmith as any thing to which he put his name; the first paragraph he introduced into the preface:—

*“ To the Public.*

“ Of all the studies which have employed the industrious or amused the idle, perhaps Natural History deserves the preference: other sciences generally terminate in doubt or rest in bare speculation; but here every step is marked with certainty; and while a description of every object around us teaches to supply our wants, it satisfies our curiosity.

“ A comprehensive system, however, of this most pleasing science has been hitherto wanting. Nor is it a little surprising, when every other branch of literature has been of late cultivated with so much success, how this most interesting department should have been neglected.

“ How far the present performance has supplied the defects, and reformed the errors, of Natural History, is left to the public to determine. Those who have read the author's *Practice of Physic*, and his other medical and geographical compositions, will see evident marks not only of the philosopher but of the accurate and judicious traveller; and cannot doubt that his abilities were adequate to this undertaking, and that he had abundant opportunities to convince himself of the truth of what he has asserted.

“ He has had indeed, one advantage over almost all former naturalists, namely, that of having visited a variety of countries, and examined the productions

of each upon the spot. Whatever America or the known parts of Africa have produced to excite curiosity have been carefully observed by him, and compared with the accounts of others.

“This work, though comprised within the compass of six volumes, has employed great part of the author's life; and there is not a figure represented in any of the plates but what was drawn either by himself or his son under his inspection. Nor has the reader's convenience been less considered than his pleasure and improvement. Each of these volumes, if printed as works of this kind usually are, might have made a large quarto, and the whole have been sold for six guineas instead of eighteen shillings; but as the improvement of natural knowledge may conduce to the improvement of religion and piety, it was thought expedient to make this work as cheap as possible, that it might fall within the compass of every studious person, and that all might be acquainted with the great and wonderful works of nature, see the dependence of creature upon creature, and of all upon the Creator.”

The revision of this work, in addition to the matter supplied, occupied him several weeks; for the speculation being of moment to the bookseller, was not to be risked without all the aids that some knowledge and much genius could supply. Besides the preface, introduced into his miscellaneous works on their first collection, he wrote the introduction to the history of quadrupeds, which though



known to be his by Bishop Percy, Isaac Reed, and others, found no place on that occasion, in consequence of the misunderstanding of the former already alluded to with the publishers, by which they lost his aid previous to publication. Aware of this omission, it occurred to the writer there might be others ; and a close examination of the volumes rendered it certain by internal evidence, that, in addition to other traces of his pen, the introductions to the histories of Birds, of Fishes, of Insects, and of Botany, were his, the whole forming about eighty pages, characterised by his usual ingenuity of remark, philosophical spirit, and elegance of manner. Influenced by the same guide of internal evidence, he was led to reject the introduction to the fifth volume, giving an account of mineral waters, written probably by Brookes himself: the pen of Goldsmith is not to be traced in it: it simply states facts of their supposed combinations and uses in diseases, and therefore by its nature required no power of writing to excite the curiosity or propitiate the favour of the reader.

This book never became popular, being too extensive, perhaps too dry, for the juvenile description of readers, and too imperfect for those of more advanced age who required to be really instructed: the plates likewise were wretchedly executed; and the claim set up for the author, of having verified by personal examination all the productions noticed in his volumes belonging to America and the known parts of Africa, would

appear, however extensively he may have travelled, impracticable, and thence have occasioned distrust in the general accuracy of his statements.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two years have elapsed since the preceding notice was written ; and the conviction in the mind of the writer of the obligations of this book to Goldsmith have been recently fully confirmed. The first positive intimation was discovered in a newspaper announcement of Brookes's work in 1775, where it is stated by the publishers\*, that "four volumes of this edition were corrected by Mr. Oliver Goldsmith," and subsequently more positive proofs have been put into his hands in the receipts for money for the assistance rendered which passed on the occasion. By these it appears his remuneration in the first instance was small ; afterwards, in consideration of further labour in correction and revision and adding to the number of prefaces, the original sum in the following receipt was nearly trebled.

"Oct. 11th, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery eleven guineas in full, for writing the introductions and preface to Dr. Brookes's Natural History.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

\* Carnan and Newbery : —it appeared in opposition to "Animated Nature."

Two items in another account state that Dr. Goldsmith is to have credit for

“ 3 Prefaces to the Natural History - - £6 6 0  
 Correcting 4 vols. Brookes’s Nat. History - 0 0 0”

In another set of memorandums of the publisher eighteen in number, to settle accounts with various persons, the sixteenth on the list is the following :—

“ Mrs. Brookes’s, and charge for alterations made in the plates and the printed copy that was obliged to be cancelled £26 0 0

“ And to Dr. Goldsmith, writing prefaces, and correcting the work - - - - - 30 0 0

In all - - - £56 0 0”

During the summer, he appears to have been frequently in London notwithstanding a press of literary occupation, enjoying with Johnson and Boswell several of their social tavern meetings. He had already impressed the latter, as he confesses in his work, with a high opinion of Johnson, by encomiums passed upon his humanity, a theme upon which Goldsmith was eloquent and on which he always rendered due honour to his friend. Speaking of Mr. Levett, the well known inmate of the moralist, his observation was, “ He is poor and honest, and that is recommendation enough for Johnson.” Of another person whose character was more exceptionable, and who had paid to misfortune part of the penalty of his errors, he said, “ He is now become miserable, and that insures the protection of Johnson.”

The first exclusive meeting they seem to have enjoyed, and the fact is interesting in literary his-

tory, took place at the Mitre Tavern, in Fleet Street, on the 1st of July, 1768, when Goldsmith, always willing to throw out a provocative to discussion, started the paradox, "that knowledge was not desirable on its own account, for it often was a source of unhappiness," an idea, the fallacy of which he could at other times eloquently expose.

On the 6th, having met again at the same place with other guests of Boswell, he took ground against the maxim of the constitution, "that the King can do no wrong," affirming, "that what was morally false could not be politically true\* ; and as the King might, in the exercise of his regal power, command and cause the doing of what was wrong, it certainly might be said in sense and reason that he could do wrong." The answer to this was obvious : the King may command the committal of an improper public act, but his minister only can execute it ; the latter therefore takes the responsibility by making the deed his own ; a dilemma which it is always in his power to avoid by resigning his office.

These are specimens of that desire to take the weak side of an argument into which ingenious men are sometimes betrayed, either by affecting singularity or influenced by the whim of the moment :

\* This pointed sentence, with a little variation, was used more than once by a popular baronet on the hustings at Westminster, previous to the reform of Parliament, in allusion to the alleged corrupt return of many members. Such practices, he contended, "being morally wrong could not be politically right."

in Johnson this was often thought perversity ; in Goldsmith it was termed absurdity, or want of knowledge of his subject, though really we may suppose caused by the wish to exhibit ingenuity, or excite discussion, for no follies of this kind find place in his writings. Disputation is not a pleasing characteristic in any person, even of eminence : we can rarely think well of him who attempts to overpower our common sense, or destroy the force of generally admitted truths by sophistry however ingenious. Young men who believe they possess talent are frequently fond of it, not conscious that they often render themselves disagreeable by what they mistake for cleverness. Dr. Johnson confessed to this disposition at an early period of life, and the pages of Boswell render it doubtful whether he ever wholly conquered the desire. “ When I was a boy,” he said, “ I used always to choose the wrong side of a debate, because most ingenious things, that is to say, most new things, could be said upon it.” Goldsmith was similarly inclined : he acknowledged to Johnson, and there is an allusion to the fact in the story of George Primrose, as well as in another passage struck out of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, “ that when he first began to write, he determined to commit to paper nothing but what was new ; but he afterwards found that what was new was generally false, and from that time was no longer solicitous about novelty.” In conversa-

tion however, as we see, he could not always resist the temptation.

In the month of September, a small volume in which he was supposed to have a share, appeared from Newbery, to take its chance among a variety of competitors of more bulk and pretension, named "The Martial Review; or, a General History of the late War. Together with the Definitive Treaty; and some Reflections on the probable Consequences of the Peace."

The only part that can be claimed for him is the preface, less finished perhaps than what usually came from his hand: the body of the work, which first appeared in the "Reading Mercury" newspaper, from the pen of some person connected with the family of Christopher Smart, was now reprinted for the benefit of its members. For this unfortunate poet he entertained a degree of regard and compassion which was evinced in several efforts of active benevolence. On some occasions he is known to have given him money; at other times to have contributed literary assistance; and some time afterward, when his unhappy friend was suffering at once under occasional confinement for debt, and the more dreadful affliction of mental derangement, he drew up an appeal to the public with the view of raising subscriptions for his support and release, though doubts exist whether it ever came before the public. Bishop Percy had seen this address in MS.; and



in a letter to Malone (October 17th, 1786,\*) mentions it among other detached pieces of the Poet which he wished to procure, as “a paper which he (Goldsmith) wrote to set about a subscription for poor Smart, the mad poet: I believe this last was never printed.” It was not recovered by that prelate or his correspondent, and the present writer has likewise failed to find it in any of the periodical publications of the time.

In the first paragraph of the preface to this “Review,” we find a pretty exact definition of what his own histories, written subsequently, aimed to be,—the separation of “what is substantial and material from what is circumstantial and is useless in history;” but the importance claimed for this slight work, a duodecimo, may excite a smile in the readers of more voluminous accounts of the period described: bold claims upon public confidence he probably thought the most certain means of obtaining it. A favourable notice of this production, written by him likewise in all probability from an item in one of his accounts with Newbery, appeared in the Critical Review.

The life of an author during the greater part of the last century seems, from the small remuneration obtained in return for his exertions, to have been one of almost constant labour: he enjoyed few intervals of rest; his exertions rarely kept pace with his wants; and the conclusion of one undertaking proved but the signal for the commencement of

\* MS. correspondence communicated by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

another. Without great diligence, his bread was consumed before it was earned, and by thus anticipating his resources, he was often compelled to tax the present hour for the enjoyment of the past, in such compilations as promised the readiest supply. He has himself told us in an early production,\* that “authors, like race-horses, should be fed but not fattened:” the observation was scarcely necessary, as few have had to complain of repletion by the bounty of even their warmest admirers; and he had long afterward to lament, that far from furnishing him with luxuries, they scarcely gave him bread.

As illustrative of the number and variety of his labours at this period, the following account rendered to his principal employer, is transcribed from the original in his own handwriting now before the writer; the sum specified for the first on the list is to be considered from what has been said as only the first payment.

“Brookes’ History	-	-	-	-	£11	11	0
Preface to Universal History		-	-	-	3	3	0
Preface to Rhetoric	-	-	-	-	2	2	0
Preface to Chronicle	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
History of England	-	-	-	-	21	0	0
The Life of Christ	-	-	-	-	10	10	0
The Life [Lives] of the Fathers		-	-	-	10	10	0
Critical and Monthly	.	-	-	-	3	3	0
					<hr/> £63 0 0 <hr/>		

“Received October 11. 1763, the contents  
of Mr. Newbery.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

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\* Enquiry into Polite Learning. The phrase is said to be borrowed from Charles IX. of France.

We may presume that some of these articles, such as the History of England, were only in progress. Those charged here "Critical and Monthly," were either contributions under those heads to the Christian's Magazine, or perhaps criticisms on works belonging to Newbery, which he found means of getting inserted in the respective Reviews of that name.

Beside this general acknowledgment, separate receipts, as will appear, were signed for the chief pieces; but the sum thus due to him being insufficient to liquidate the debt to the publisher, 111*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* stated in a preceding page, he gave a promissory note for the balance:—

"I promise to pay Mr. John Newbery or order forty-eight pounds one shilling and sixpence on demand for value received.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"October 11. 1763."

Few circumstances of a merely personal nature were more gratifying to him, than the acquaintance of Mr., afterwards Sir Joshua Reynolds, which by two of his contemporaries was said to have commenced in 1762, and as they understood, by an accidental meeting in the chambers of Dr. Johnson. As men of genius, they were soon attracted to each other; occasional interviews here, or in private associations of artists, among whom Goldsmith seems to have been well known, created a more thorough knowledge of qualities that commanded

mutual esteem ; while from their different pursuits, no opening existed for collision, or that jealousy of contemporary merit of which both with whatever truth have been accused. Their friendship was literally the union of Poetry and Painting.

The painter might even then be considered at the head of his profession. The poet had not yet exhibited any striking proof of devotion to that particular art in which he afterward so much excelled, although the latent fire was probably not unobserved by one who a few years before, had the discernment and sense to appreciate and select as soon as he saw them Johnson and Burke for his friends. In Goldsmith he may have been willing also to know and to aid unfriended merit ; and the latter saw in the long and severe struggle which he had hitherto maintained with poverty and obscurity, the advantage of cultivating the acquaintance of one who by skill and success in an elegant art, had escaped from both. The painter wished to draw him into that close association which he had sought with other eminent men, and from which in the coruscations of genius mutual profit is derived. The author, equally desirous of similar advantage, found the further benefit of meeting at the table of the artist persons of rank and talents whom he might not have seen elsewhere ; his name became more familiar from being a guest there ; his succeeding publications in consequence gained more immediate attention from many of that class who admire less, as the writer

is less known in society. To be an associate of the men of eminence frequently found at the table of Reynolds, formed of itself a stamp of character which they could sufficiently appreciate, and it contributed to silence something of that fastidious criticism applied to his person and manners, by a few whose discrimination probably extended not to the qualities of his mind.

In order to increase the opportunities of social intercourse between persons formed to delight general society and each other, the Literary Club was formed; a name not assumed by themselves, but given to the association by others from the talents and celebrity of its principal members. The proposers were Johnson and Reynolds, who selected Burke, Goldsmith, Mr. Topham Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. Nugent, a physician and father of Mrs. Burke, as associates; to whom, in consequence of the frequent absence of Mr. Beauclerk and Sir John Hawkins, were added Mr. Chamier and Mr. Dyer; the former Under Secretary at War, and well known in the fashionable circles of London; the latter a man of general erudition, a friend of the Burkes, and formerly a commissary in the army. They agreed to sup together every Monday evening, afterwards changed to Friday, at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard Street, Soho. Sir Joshua Reynolds first started the project, according to that active inquirer Malone, who writes to Bishop Percy, July 7th, 1805, "Since the death of our *founder*, Sir Joshua

Reynolds, we have elected twenty-three new members, of whom we have been deprived by death of four." Others attribute the first idea to Dr. Johnson.

The formation of this club, as a matter frequently mentioned in literary history, would scarcely require notice here, but for its being a favourite resort of the Poet, and for the period of its first meeting being forgotten by the members. Johnson and Reynolds, who seem to divide the credit of the design, according to Boswell, thought it in 1764; Bishop Percy believed it to be at a later period; Sir John Hawkins says it was in 1763; and Malone, who took some pains to inquire into the matter, is disposed to give it a still earlier date, as appears by the following passage in another letter to the same prelate, August 11th, 1807.\* "I have thoughts of printing for our private use only, a list of our members (of the club) from the foundation, with the dates of their admission, the places they have filled, and the time of such deaths as have occurred. I have made the commencement (in a note in Boswell's Life of Johnson) in 1764, but I suspect it ought rather to be dated in 1762. How is this?"

The time thus assigned, or the following year, 1763, as stated by Sir John Hawkins, is probably the true date; for the latter in speaking of Goldsmith as a member of the club, expressly says in his usual harshness of phrase, that he considered

\* MS. correspondence of W. R. Mason, Esq.



him for some time as a mere drudge of the book-sellers, and was surprised subsequently, on the publication of his poem, to find genius and noble sentiments in one from whom he had expected neither. The poem appeared in 1764; and to have gained any material knowledge of him their meetings must have commenced at an earlier period. These discrepancies of opinion evince the difficulty of ascertaining facts even from contemporary testimony, when we find even the very founders of the society disagree as to the period of its origin. All the accounts however may be reconciled by considering what was probably the case, that several partial meetings of the members had occurred previous to its being regularly constituted and confined to the gentlemen already mentioned, and before a specific day or place was appropriated to their meeting. The date is of no other moment here than as evidence that Goldsmith was appreciated by many of the greatest names of the day, before he became known to the world.

Toward the end of the year he appears to have been again much in want of money, by the larger loan than usual implied in the following acknowledgment :—

“ Received from Mr. Newbery twenty-five guineas, for which I promise to account.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ December 17, 1763.”

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£26 5 0.”

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One of the causes which tradition has stated for this supply was a journey said to have been undertaken by him into the country; to Yorkshire according to some, whence originated either from chance, or from some incident of an interesting description that occurred during the excursion, the tale of the Vicar of Wakefield. But a story was told by Mr. English, attributing the loan to another cause; that Goldsmith having about this period met a person in London whom he had known on the Continent, invited him to dinner at a tavern, and advantage being taken of his good nature by the guest, all the money he possessed was either borrowed under some plausible pretext, or procured by less justifiable means, and in either case being wholly lost he was obliged to quit his lodgings for a time, from inability to satisfy impatient creditors.

A degree of corroboration is given to this anecdote by his having been really absent from his usual abode at Islington during the winter quarter between Christmas and March; the fact, indeed, admits of explanation in the greater convenience of being in town at such a season, when a short journey as it now appears, was then a matter of some moment from defective police, especially at night. The attraction of the club claimed him one night in the week, and private society had its temptations more frequently; in which case, the danger as well as fatigue of a late walk, was not inconsiderable. It will be seen likewise that

although absent he retained and paid for his room.

The account of his difficulties may be in substance true; for those of literary men were too frequent not to give rise to apprehensions for their personal liberty. But as pecuniary embarrassments convey something of tacit reproach by implying want of principle in the debtor, it is to be remembered that his, like those of many other honest though indigent men of talents, were small in amount and commonly incurred for the absolute necessities of life; they became serious only from the state of the law which permitted arrest for so small a sum as five pounds; a misfortune from which all the talents and high moral principle of Johnson could not shield him. The character of a debtor however may be safely estimated by the conduct of his creditor, and judged by this standard Goldsmith stood high; it is believed that he was never subjected, though threatened on an occasion to be mentioned hereafter, to the mortification of arrest; several to whom he was indebted believed he would pay them when he could; and such as knew him well, we know from more than one unexceptionable testimony, were content to wait his convenience and even supply his wants when there was no immediate prospect of repayment. There is one class of tradesmen who among the necessitous may be considered more particularly the touchstone of credit, and of these "honest William Filby" as he was termed by the

Poet, the tailor before mentioned, placed such implicit faith in his honour as to furnish his wardrobe with all that an occasionally expensive taste required, assured he should not ultimately be a loser by his confidence. From the books of this person it appears that towards the end of 1762, and early in the following year, he supplied clothes of a description by no means implying unprosperous circumstances, to the amount of fifteen pounds, for which he received in August following a draft on Newbery at six days' sight: a prudent clause is indeed introduced in the ledger, in which it is noted, that this draft "*when paid*, will be in full," &c.; it was nevertheless duly honoured.

To his necessities which were pretty obvious, and his disinclination to epistolatory communication which was equally known, Dr. Grainger who had returned to England from St. Christopher's for some months, partly with the view of bringing out his poem of the Sugar Cane, thus humorously alludes in a letter to Dr. Percy, dated March 24th, 1764.

"When I taxed little Goldsmith for not writing as he promised, his answer was, that he never wrote a letter in his life; and faith I believe him—except to a bookseller for money."\*

The "Preface to Rhetoric" charged in a preceding memorandum at two guineas is not ascertained, but may probably have been a partnership

\* MS. correspondence of Mr. Mason.

school-book, printed for Dodsley early in January 1764, under the title of “Elements of Rhetoric and Poetry: exemplified in a select collection of passages from the best authors in Verse and Prose.”\* This book has been sought in vain.

Another piece “Preface to Chronicle” in the same account, has not been discovered, no publication with such a title being traced among the literary advertisements of the day.

The translations of the “Life of Christ” and the “Lives of the Fathers” appeared first, it is believed, in the *Christian’s Magazine*; and in 1774, a few months after the death of the translator, were published with his name in a separate form by Carnan and Newbery.† The receipt bears a similar date as several others:—

“Oct. 11th, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery twenty-one pounds for translating the Life of Christ and the Lives of the Fathers.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

\* Public Advertiser, Jan. 11. 1764.

† Among a variety of his pieces enumerated in the advertisement on this occasion, are—“An History of the Life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To which is added the Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary; extracted from the Holy Scriptures and the best Ecclesiastical Historians. For the Instruction of Youth. Price one shilling.”

“An History of the Lives, Actions, Travels, Sufferings, and Deaths of the most eminent Martyrs and Primitive Fathers of the Church in the first Four Centuries. For the Instruction of Youth.”—*Morning Chronicle*, July 1, 1774.

A publication meant to compete with the Universal History, but more condensed and therefore more calculated for general readers, being projected in 1762 by several booksellers, among whom Newbery took the lead, was about this period announced for publication. It was to be comprised in twelve volumes large octavo, one to appear every month until completed; the first came out on the 2nd April under the title of—"A General History of the World from the Creation to the present time, &c. &c. By William Guthrie, Esq., John Gray, Esq., and others eminent in this branch of literature."

To this Goldsmith contributed the preface; one of those well written introductory notices, presenting a sparkling commentary on what often proved to be a dull text, and in which he and Dr. Johnson possessed nearly a monopoly of the trade as well as of the excellence. This branch of authorship now nearly extinct, required practised skill, considerable ingenuity, and a knowledge of what there should be at least, if not what there was, in the book it introduced; like ingenious Counsel in the Courts, such advocates say for their clients what the clients want the skill or the boldness to say for themselves; and it may be remarked that Smollett whose pen on almost every sort of composition was in demand, seems not to have attained particular distinction in this. Of the sum received for the preface we are left in no doubt by the following specific acknowledgment, in addition to his own charge given in a previous page:—



“Oct. 11th, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery, three guineas for a Preface to the History of the World.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

About half this piece only has been hitherto printed, being taken probably from the first rude draught communicated to Dr. Percy in manuscript. From the tenor of the concluding paragraph it would appear as if the writer had likewise taken a share in the body of the work, excepting it be supposed he speaks in the character of the chief editor or author, Mr. Guthrie. Whoever be the supposed speaker, the last sentence without doubt was a burst of personal feeling in allusion to his own slow progress to reputation, the prospect of which after seven years' constant and nearly unknown labours, began at length to open to his view. The complete preface will be found in the new edition of his works accompanying the present volumes. “Were he who now particularly entreats the reader's candid examination to mention the part he has had in this work himself, he is well convinced, and that without any affected modesty, that such a discovery would only show the superiority of his associates in this undertaking; but it is not from his friendship or his praise, but from their former labours in the learned world that they are to expect their reward. Whatever be the fate of this history, their reputation is in no danger, but will still continue rising; for they

have found by its gradual increase already, that the approbation of folly is loud and transient ; that of wisdom still, but lasting."

No positive evidence exists by which to ascertain whether any portion of the history itself proceeded from his pen : and in so voluminous a work consisting of about five hundred and fifty large and closely printed pages in each volume, it would be vain to search for those coincidences of sentiment, expression, and manner which have assisted the writer on other occasions. The mass of matter in the work is very great, the labour must have been long, and the writers various ; but it required rather diligence than genius, and was probably performed by those laborious and not unuseful men found hanging on the outskirts of literature in a great metropolis, and who though sensible and well informed, being unable to attain eminence are content in order to supply their wants to be simply industrious. The price paid for it being no more than about thirty shillings per sheet, offered no temptation to a higher order of writers.

Surprise will be excited that in a history of the world, England the native country of the writers and readers of such a book, and as might be supposed possessing the strongest interest in the estimation of both, should be forgotten, and no explanation given of the cause ; an omission difficult to explain except by supposing that if well executed it would have interfered with some other work

from the same publishers. Is it probable that Goldsmith having undertaken to draw up some such compilation in his leisure hours, found he could make it more popular and profitable as a separate work, and that Newbery concurring in opinion, the original plan of giving it in this publication was dropped? Whatever truth there be in the conjecture, it is certain he had been for some months occupied on this subject, and with some ingenuity adopted a new form and title as a means of fixing public attention.

He had been early impressed, as appears in several passages of the *Enquiry into Polite Learning*, with the difficulty of poor and unfriended authors rising into literary reputation; he believed that their books were not read; their merits, when known to write for bread, derided by some and neglected by others. In this opinion he seems to have found something of a kindred feeling in Johnson who wrote from the heart, in that pathetic line—"Slow rises worth by poverty deprest." To obviate the fancied disadvantage and make an experiment on public taste, he was willing to diverge from the beaten track, and try what degree of attention could be drawn toward a book supposed to emanate from the titled and the wealthy. A harmless deception was therefore practised such as authors conceive themselves privileged to use; one which might assist a useful book, but was not likely to support a bad one. On the 26th June 1764 came out "for the use of the

young nobility and gentry: in two pocket volumes, price 6s. bound; the History of England in a series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son.”\*

The success of this little work whether owing to its merit or its title, exceeded all expectation; it soon became a general favourite, was put into the hands of educated youth; and even found a high place in the regard of the better informed; numerous reprints have been made of it for a series of years, and if less called for than formerly in consequence of numberless competitors in the same field, newer indeed but far inferior in desert, it is still occasionally seen in the reading of adults; many of whom it is to be feared, have been beguiled by its brief, clear, and sprightly narrative from the perusal of works of greater length and ampler details on the history of their country.†

The philosophical spirit pervading the volumes forms one of their chief attractions; indicative of an enlarged mind not so solicitous to detail minute events in history, as to draw lessons of instruction from a comprehensive view of the whole. The impression created by the title is therefore

\* *Public Advertiser*.—The first announcement appeared on the 17th May.

† That it is still read with attention by the educated and able, appears from the fact that a daily journal of great political influence, quoted and argued more than once from some of its sentiments during the excitement and discussion of a late great political measure (Parliamentary Reform). No suspicion seems to have been entertained by the writer who referred to the work, that its author was Goldsmith.

well carried on. We can hardly believe that a nobleman of talents, devoting more than common attention to the education of his son, might write such letters ; even occasional mistakes favour the supposition of not being so much the production of a professed author, as the less studied labours of one writing for a private object. The observations are just, forcible, and often profound ; so much so occasionally as to have been considered by some rather above the capacity of boys, to whom he replied that he wrote not for children, but for educated youth approaching to manhood, whose capacities were strengthened by exercise on familiar subjects. No undue political bias pervades the work. Each party in the state receives that degree of praise or censure to which they appear fairly entitled, the writer preserving on the one hand becoming leaning to the regal office and authority when threatened by factious or ambitious enemies, and on the other that regard for rational liberty which all constitutional writers display.

• A few errors though of little moment occur in names, dates, and minor points, which it would have required little trouble to correct ; these confirm the impression that they were written in haste and without sufficient reference to larger preceding works. The mode of composition, given on the authority of a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* who professes to have known him at the time, and partly confirmed by admissions of his own in con-

versation sufficiently explains how they arose ; this plan however must be considered rather occasional than as one invariably followed.

In the morning he read Hume, Rapin, Carte, and Kennett ; made a few memoranda for his guidance ; walked out with a friend or two for a country excursion, of which he was always fond ; returned to a temperate dinner and a cheerful evening, and seized a few hours from sleep to write as much as he had contemplated by the studies of the morning. He professed to derive advantage in facility of composition, an easier style, and more perfect knowledge of the subject, by thus having more time to revolve it ; but we may believe in this case that his memory was more taxed than his authorities ; and if the former misled him at the moment, the error of the night was forgotten to be rectified by recurrence to more certain guides, that of books, in the morning.

No very deep critical skill is required to pronounce it beyond all competition, the most finished and elegant summary of our history, in such a compass, that has been, or is likely to be, written ; because few who possess the power of its writer are likely to choose the same mode of treating the subject. Neither is his felicity of style likely to be equalled ; ease, elegance, and perspicuity will ever claim a large share of public favour even when minor blemishes are known to be present. To these qualities, as well as to the ingenuity and depth of the reflections, were owing the trans-



lation of the volumes into French by Madame Brissot, wife of the celebrated leader in the French Revolution. It appeared in two volumes octavo, 1786—1790, under the name of "*Lettres Philosophiques et Politiques sur l'Histoire de l'Angleterre*," and met with considerable success; her husband added notes to the translation.

It is illustrative of the neglect shown to the detail of Goldsmith's literary labours, that his claim to so popular a compendium of English history is unknown to the great majority of readers; nor are there many persons professedly devoted to literary inquiry more familiar with the fact.\* At the period of publication no particular secrecy being observed, the booksellers as well as his literary acquaintance were better informed; when a second edition appeared he sent copies to several friends; and on Dr. Percy calling upon him about the same time, the volumes were with something of a jocular apology for the humble nature of the attempt, put into his hands. Davies, for whom he afterwards wrote the *History of England* in four volumes to which his name is attached, was equally aware of his claim to this: and he himself smiled at what he thought the novelty of the deception, and jested upon its success.

\* Mr. Campbell in his *Life of Mrs. Siddons* seems to attribute this work to Coombe, author of the *Tour of Dr. Syntax*; were there any doubt about the writer his claim would scarcely be allowed, for though dying at an advanced age, he must have been very young when it was published.

The title page however misled most persons, who gave the credit—for considerable credit became attached to the performance—to such members of the peerage as had cultivated a taste for letters; by some to Lord Chesterfield, by others to Lord Orrery, but by the greater number to Lord Lyttleton; and the latter, however high in literary fame, was so little displeased with popular opinion on this point as to take no trouble to contradict it. To him therefore the Letters are still assigned. He had at this period some slight knowledge of Goldsmith, and is alleged to have given him shortly afterwards hopes of being provided for by an appointment under government, a promise which, if ever made, it is unnecessary to say was never fulfilled. Whether it was unwillingness to deprive his expected patron of his reputed literary honours, or supposed danger to his own fame when better established, by connecting it with so slight a work, he never afterwards publicly claimed it even by that coy implication common to authors or their publishers, in attaching to announcements of such works as they choose to acknowledge the names of those that are not. Thus the *Citizen of the World* and *Vicar of Wakefield*, which had not his name in the title-page, regularly followed advertisements of the *Traveller*; not so the letters of the alleged Nobleman, which by not being seen in such company, appeared to be tacitly disclaimed.

He received, we are told by Davies in the *Life*

of Garrick, for his three Histories of England, this being one of the number, 750*l.* or 800*l.*; a sum which is considerably exaggerated. He had himself indeed in his character of publisher, paid 552*l.* for the work in four volumes, and the abridgment of it in one; this would leave 200*l.* as the produce of the 'Letters.' Twenty-five sheets only of letter-press form the two volumes; and as Dodsley allowed only three guineas for an octavo sheet on a subject requiring more inquiry and research, a less sum would probably have been considered sufficient for a duodecimo sheet on history, although the quantity of matter might have been as great. Whether this was received, the following receipt renders questionable; no other acknowledgment connected with the volumes can be found, and excepting he experienced further liberality in succeeding reprints of them, the whole amount paid him was probably under 50*l.*

"Oct. 11th, 1763.—Received of Mr. John Newbery twenty-one pounds, which with what I received before is in full for the copy of the History of England in a series of Letters two volumes in 12mo.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

To such as have not seen the work, or perused it more carelessly from not knowing who was the author, the introductory portion touching generally on the subject of history, will be new and give a good idea of his general manner. He

recants here the contemptuous censure passed on the study of mathematics in a preceding publication; the results no doubt of further reflection and experience; logic and metaphysics however stand no higher in his estimation than his friend Beatty said they did when at College.

Examples of his repetitions of a favourite sentence occasionally occur; in the first letter we find one which he had previously used in the Enquiry into Polite Learning\*, and again puts into the mouth of Croaker in the Good-natured Mant†:—  
 “When all is done, human life is at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child that must be played with and humoured a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over.” It seems to be taken from Sir William Temple’s Heads for an Essay upon the different Conditions of Life and Fortune. “After all life is but a trifle, that should be played with till we lose it, and then it is not worth regretting.” Another, used in three of his pieces, that “passions, like fermentation in liquors, disturb the youthful breast only to refine it,” is in part applied to our Government connected with the great struggle of Charles I. with his Parliament:—“The laws became more precise, and the subject more ready to obey, as if a previous fermentation in the constitution was necessary to its subsequent refinement.” In the thirty-fifth letter, when speaking of the murder of David Rizzio, the

\* See Works, vol. i.

† Act I. Scene iv. See Works, vol. iv.

favourite of Mary Queen of Scots, he repeats of him what he had said in a paper on the different "Schools of Music" printed in the British Magazine : \* "Thus ended Rizzio, a man who has been more spoken of perhaps than any other who rose from so mean a station. What his other talents to please might have been, is unknown ; but certain it is, that several indications of his skill in music remain even to the present time : all those pleasing Scotch airs which are set in such a peculiar taste, being universally allowed to be of his composition."

To these "Letters" his subsequent History of England in four volumes, is pretty largely indebted.

\* See Works, vol. i.

## APPENDIX.

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NOTE. VOL. I. PAGE 40.

*Lawrence Whyte's Poems. He is believed to have been  
a country schoolmaster.*

THE system adopted by several Irish landed proprietors, of which complaint is made in the familiar strains of Lawrence Whyte,

‘How many villages they razed,  
How many parishes laid waste,  
To fatten bullocks, sheep, and cows,  
When scarce one parish has two ploughs ;’

or, in other words, turning arable into grazing land without regard to the wants of the people, is said to have originated in very selfish motives. A resolution passed the Irish House of Commons, “that whoever demanded tithe of agistment was an enemy to the Protestant interest;” this, though not law, operated as such upon the clergy, who were deterred from demanding their rights upon grass land, which included all the parks, pleasure grounds, and many large estates of the most powerful men in Ireland; while the tacit exemption thus given to that species of property formed a premium for throwing much more land out of cultivation; an additional burden for the support of the clergy was thus thrown upon the poorer tillers of the soil. To these and other grievances alluded to in the text, with the contrast they exhibit to the state of ease and prosperity enjoyed by farmers thirty years before, the rhymes



of Lawrence Whyte chiefly advert. As these are rare in Ireland, and never likely to be seen by the English reader, and being curious in themselves as descriptive of Irish rural life between 1700-1730, a few more extracts may gratify curiosity.

Of Deoch an Doruis and his supposed spouse, in the poem already quoted from, by whom are meant, in fact, the genius of Irish hospitality, he says,—

“ They were a thrifty loving pair,  
 Who liv'd in plenty all the year,  
 Stood at a moderate easy rent,  
 Enjoying life with vast content.  
 They kept a harp, and pair of tables,  
 Good oats, and hay in barns and stables ;  
 And all extravagance to shun,  
 He wore the cloth his wife had spun ;  
 By frugal means kept out of debt,  
 Nor was his door with duns beset ;  
 His sideboard was not plate but wood,  
 Which made his payments very good,  
 Kept a good cellar, kitchen, larder,  
 And those who will enquire farther,  
 His birth, or pedigree to trace,  
 Will find him of Milesian race,  
 Descended from some Irish king,  
 If all be true our Druids sing.  
 His grandsire's fate did oft bemoan,  
 Who forfeited in forty-one,\*  
 Her sire lost all in eighty-eight,†  
 Which we remember to be fact ;  
 Though he was in no insurrection,  
 But kept at home, and took protection,  
 And was of the Strongbonian race ;  
 All could not mitigate his case.

“ Then by industry and by farm,  
 They lived so comfortably warm,

\* Insurrection and Massacre of 1641.

† Revolution of 1688.

The landlord had his rent well paid,  
 Nor had he any cause to dread,  
 His tenant to give up his lease,  
 As now, too often is the case,  
 Run in arrear, or fly away  
 To North or South America.  
 Whene'er the Squire was run a-ground,  
 He could advance him fifty pound,  
 And on a pinch could make a shift,  
 To give his honour a good lift.

“ It was the humour of them both,  
 To live upon their country growth,  
 And valued, not one pinch of snuff,  
 Your canisters of Indian stuff.  
 For they could breakfast, sup, and dine  
 Without a drop of tea or wine,  
 And nothing foreign, she would tell ye,  
 Should clothe her back, or fill her belly.

\* \* \* \*

“ He taught his sons to hold the plough,  
 To sow the seed, to reap and mow ;  
 To take the area of a field,  
 Before it was manur'd or till'd ;  
 They read the Irish, Latin spoke,  
 The head of Priscian seldom broke ;  
 An argument could form and twist,  
 Like sophister or casuist,  
 They spoke it without hesitation,  
 Though now a days 'tis not the fashion,  
 Since graduates tell us 'tis pedantic,  
 And he who speaks it, must be frantic,  
 A jesuit, conjuror, or clown,  
 Who has no taste for court or town.

\* \* \* \*

“ Since Dechadorus play'd his part,  
 To train his sons by rules and art,  
 By precepts, and by good example,  
 Next comes his wife to give her sample.

The female issue were her care,  
With proper documents to rear.

\* \* \* \* \*

“She often made them labour hard,  
To brew and bake, to spin and card,  
To dress a dish or two of meat,  
Fit for the squire himself to eat,  
To use their needle, read and write,  
And dance the Irish trot at night,  
They made a curtsy on a pinch  
Exceeding any country wench,  
Without a hoop look'd prim and gay,  
On Sunday, or on holyday,  
At patrons\* danc'd a jig or hornpipe,  
Play'd on a fiddle or a cornpipe,  
Such country dances as they play,  
On salt-box, or the tongs and key,  
Five cards they play'd with art and skill,  
As ladies now do at quadrille,  
They play'd for two-pence or a groat,  
But higher never could be brought :  
Yet to their praise it may be said  
They made good butter, cheese, and bread,  
Good Iskebaha could distil,  
Wherein they show'd the utmost skill.

“With mien above the common sort,  
They mimick'd those who come from court,  
And walk'd a minuet smooth and straight,  
According to the figure eight,  
And that with better grace and airs,  
Than some who dance at the Lord Mayor's.  
Though never bred in town or city,  
With repartee, or pun could fit ye,  
And as their heels denote them dancers,  
Their heads were turn'd for witty answers.  
And when at work could sweetly chime  
Their Irish songs in tune and time;  
Whene'er requested for a song,  
There was no need to tease them long ;

\* Patron-Saints days, kept festively by Roman Catholics in Ireland.

Such as they had they gave it free,  
Without a long apology.

“ Then Dechadorus ev’ry year  
Could give his landlord hearty cheer,  
A cordial welcome to his friend,  
And gave himself at latter end ;  
You might as well hope to get free  
From Newgate, or the Marshalsea,  
As strive to go by force or stealth,  
Till first you drink his landlord’s health,  
When that was done, then you were sure,  
To meet his good wife at the door,  
Who with full brimmers plies you fairly,  
The quintessence of Irish barley,  
You must comply—durante lite,  
To take a cup of aquavitæ,  
And tells you while it is a filling,  
‘ ’Tis water of my own distilling,  
‘ A perfect cordial, and as such,  
‘ You need not fear to take too much,  
‘ Then take another cup of it,  
‘ ’T will make you over-flow with wit ;  
‘ If any of the seeds remain,  
‘ Within the compass of your brain,  
‘ These waters quickly make them sprout,  
‘ And into branches flourish out :  
‘ It gives them such a sudden spring,  
‘ You cannot long forbear to sing,  
‘ It oils the tongue, the lungs, and weason,  
‘ And makes us exercise our reason ;  
‘ This makes the learned and the wise,  
‘ To argue, and philosophise,  
‘ Before we part—you ’ll find it true,  
‘ And now, dear friend—I drink to you ! ”

The prevailing taste for pedigree, even among the humbler classes, the farmer and his wife are thus supposed to dwell upon :—

“ Lo ! here genealogy comes in,  
Then we are all but three a kin,

Old Dechadorus makes it out,  
 Whilst flowing flagons go about,  
 Who rises from his elbow chair,  
 Thus speaks with solemn serious air :  
 ‘ If we may credit any story,  
 ‘ Of clan O Neal, or clan O Rory,  
 ‘ O Connor Sligo, Faly, Kerry,  
 ‘ Macarty Reagh, and Sulevan Berry,  
 ‘ Brian Borous, offspring Inchiquin,  
 ‘ And we—but six or eight a kin,  
 ‘ Together with our cousin Daly,  
 ‘ Our cousin Flaherty, and Maly,  
 ‘ The O’s and Mac’s are all our own,  
 ‘ Our cousin Reilly, and Malone,  
 ‘ Mac Dermot prince of Cullevin,  
 ‘ Mac Dermod Roe, O Doud, O Flin,  
 ‘ O Kelly, Shaughnesy, O Gara,  
 ‘ Mac Donnel, Geoghegan, O Hara,  
 ‘ And not forgetting, my dear joy !  
 ‘ O Carrol, Coghlan, and Molloy,  
 ‘ With many more, our flesh and blood,  
 ‘ As great as these, and full as good,  
 ‘ For many ages long before us,  
 ‘ Were of the tribe of Deoch a Dorus,  
 ‘ All kings or heroes in their time,  
 ‘ Whose names in Irish annals chime,  
 ‘ Descending all from great Melesius,  
 ‘ A thousand years before Turgesius,  
 ‘ Whom we for tyranny have slain,  
 ‘ And drove away his Gothic train.  
 ‘ I could enumerate you more,  
 ‘ Whose predecessors heretofore,  
 ‘ Have bore the sceptre for a while,  
 ‘ As sovereign princes of our isle ;  
 ‘ Their regal race are beggars now  
 ‘ Reduc’d to drive or hold the plough.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ ‘ My wife, her pedigree can trace ye,  
 ‘ From all the followers of De Lacy,  
 ‘ In Connaught, Munster, or in Leinster,  
 ‘ From highest lady to the spinster,

' From all the favourites of King John,  
 ' And tells their names down one by one ;  
 ' There's Crum a Butler ! Crum a Boo !  
 ' Pray God that all she says be true !  
 ' For she will tell you, on her faith  
 ' She is akin to all Westmeath ;  
 ' And to that county she may join,  
 ' All from the Shannon to the Boyne.' "

Carolan (*see page 36. of this vol.*) is probably described  
 in the following lines :—

" The harper hull'd some folks asleep,  
 Whose ditties made old women weep,  
 And then with torches brisk and nice,  
 Set them a dancing in a trice ;  
 Although illiterate and blind,  
 He had the gifts of tongue and mind ;  
 Though poor and humble his condition,  
 He was a poet and musician ;  
 His harp for Irish heroes strung,  
 Their fall he wept, and zeal he sung ;  
 His old Strongbonians, and Melesians,  
 He sung as Homer did his Grecians."

Of some of the Christmas sports of Ireland at that time,  
 we have the following curious account. Such memorials  
 of joyous though primitive manners in England, delight us  
 in the retrospect, and cannot be without interest when told  
 of the sister country ; in these Goldsmith no doubt often  
 took part ; and the names given were those of respectable  
 families in Westmeath.

" Lest any should mistake the time,  
 By this our prelude put in rhyme,  
 We shall explain it, if you please,  
 It was in Christmas holidays,  
 About the thirtieth of December,  
 As near as I can well remember,  
 The moon was just a quarter old,  
 The wind at North, the weather cold,



In Anne's long victorious reign,  
 Who triumph'd over France and Spain,  
 When Marlborough's fame through Europe ran,  
 Who fought the battles of Queen Anne ;  
 Then did the name of Deochadorus  
 Become so numerous and glorious,  
 As well Strongbonians as Milesians,  
 Kept open house on all occasions,  
 That scarce a parish or a town  
 Throughout the kingdom but had one.  
 Then Cromwell's tribes, of later date,  
 Laid by their civil jars, and heat,  
 Became more generous and free,  
 Drank Deochadorus neighbourly,  
 And though they could not mouth him well,  
 They into all his humours fell :  
 For all who breathe the Irish air,  
 Must in its happy influence share ;  
 It gives them such a turn of mind,  
 As makes them candid, free, and kind.

" Should Oliver Dalton tell the story,  
 Of Manus Mallan, Jack the Tory,  
 Long Tom's exploits some years ago,  
 Of prancing Garrot, and Will Roe,  
 With all the frolics of the West,  
 He is the man could tell them best,  
 Who keeps the annals of them all  
 At Baskin, or at Noughavall.

Now laying by all affectation,  
 Digression, or long invocation,  
 Sing thou, my muse ! the merry rambles,  
 Of Nugents, Dillons, Daltons, Gambles,  
 Fitz Gerald's, Kellys, and Magans,  
 Carousing with their different clans,  
 With many more of equal fame,  
 Too long a catalogue to name,  
 With those who whilom there have flourish'd,  
 Now dead ; or by late wars impoverish'd,—  
 The task too great,—could not be done  
 From Mullingar unto Athlone.

Then honest George, who loved mirth,  
As well as any man on earth,  
By good economy took care,  
For all the seasons of the year,  
To have his table well supplied ;  
And when at home was not denied,  
With prudence and with plenty blest,  
With open arms receiv'd his guest.

“ We can't forget young Ar——r's freaks,  
His drinking bouts with jolly rakes,  
How many has he kill'd with drinking ?  
How many more sent home a blinking ?  
In stealing homewards, grop'd their way,  
At midnight, or at break of day :  
How many has he sent home reeling,  
Blind drunk, without the sense of feeling ?  
'Twas Deochadorous night and day,  
Until he drank himself away.

“ What can we say to jolly Will,  
Whose rambles would a volume fill,  
The father of a sober son,—  
With grief we say—he's dead and gone,  
And further we shall not presume,  
But gently tread upon his tomb.

“ There's Hubert the old rummager,  
With Sheill the old encourager  
Of frolics, at each drinking bout,  
Are veterans that hold it out ;  
With Will the heir of Killinboy,  
Who drank his neighbours, round him, dry,  
They and Will Roe, with some few more,  
Are all that's left of the old corps.

“ Young Will our hero now is miss'd,  
Whom death took early on his list ;  
With Harry Bane, and Harry Duff,  
Our chiefest leaders on in buff ;  
Like knights of old each had a squire,  
Who did a waiting man require,

The man, an underling, or two,  
His work and drudgery to do ;  
This was an independent troop,  
Of squires and gentlemen made up,  
Subalterns, and of volunteers,  
And most of them were cavaliers ;  
They went in squadrons here and there,  
To graze and forage half the year,  
And make their winter quarters good,  
Wherever there was drink or food,  
At any christ'ning, feast, or wedding,  
Give them but drink, they ask'd no bedding.

“ When brawny Bob, at sixty-three,  
Went out a mumming merrily ;  
With such a squadron dress'd so antic,  
You'd swear that he and they were frantic ;  
Duniel of old, was the parade,  
When they went out to serenade,  
The scene for merriment and plays  
In honest John and Bess's days,  
Whose virtues hover round their tomb,  
Which time itself cannot consume,  
From thence to Tobber we withdrew,  
The proper place for rendezvous,  
There was our wardrobe, there we stript,  
And each man got himself equipp'd ;  
Then turning out in such disguise,  
Occasion'd laughter and surprise,  
Whoever had the worst array,  
Was chosen chief to lead the way,  
To him the greatest honours shown,  
Just like a monarch on a throne

“ One took a weaver's working dress,  
All old and tatter'd, you may guess,  
But then a mighty strife arose,  
In casting lots about his clothes.  
Hall had secur'd his frock and cap,  
Seven years, I'm sure, without a nap,  
Which hung together like a net,  
And kept out neither cold nor wet,

Another scrambles for his throws,  
 Who in the scuffle got some blows,  
 Then does arise a greater racket,  
 About a sailor's draw'rs and jacket,  
 A miller's hat, and leathern breeches,  
 And mittings wore in fencing ditches ;  
 Some wore a mask who wanted none,  
 Which taken off, were much at one.  
 Then some to look more tight and gay,  
 Made up their furniture of hay,  
 Boots, belts, and stirrups all were spun,  
 From what their hobby's fed upon.

“ Who can describe the cavalcade,  
 When each got on his quadruped ?  
 Which Hogarth's pencil scarce could draw,  
 With their accoutrements of straw,  
 Old garrons\*, hobbys, gauld and lame,  
 The riders wild, the garrons tame,  
 They sweated hard to flog and drive  
 Poor cattle who were scarce alive,  
 Upon a pannel or long suggan, †  
 You see the heroes lash and tug on,  
 When Rosinant begins to stumble,  
 The horse and man together tumble;  
 With clothes embroider'd mounts again,  
 In hopes to keep a stricter rein,  
 And fain would make the garron skip,  
 Until he got the second trip,  
 Fell in a deep and muddy slough,  
 At length got out – the Lord knows how,—  
 He thank'd his stars, no limb at all  
 Of his was broke in either fall,  
 But by the last got mask and gloves,  
 Then up he gets and forward moves,  
 Was chosen out the fittest man,  
 Of all the troop to lead the van.  
 Then to Rathconrath in full charge  
 We went to visit cousin George ;

\* Applied in Ireland to the inferior class of horses.

† A kind of straw mat, homely substituted for a saddle,

To him our first respects we paid,  
 Gave him a dance and serenade ;  
 Embracing us with as much joy,  
 As George the younger then a boy.  
 Then after midnight up we started,  
 And after all our mirth we parted ;  
 From thence we went to Balnecarrow,  
 To bid our cousin Jack good morrow ;  
 In pails we drank the night away,  
 Got fuddled, sick, and slept next day.

“ Before we finished that campaign,  
 We met at Tobber once again,  
 Rouz'd up John Mears, who by and by  
 Brought us some ale and Christmas pie,  
 The walls whereof were soon broke down,  
 And made Salt-acre all our own.  
 Thence to Nick Borren at Killare,  
 Who gave us most delicious fare,  
 'Twas choice roast beef and humming ale,  
 A hearty welcome and a tale ;  
 A gross of oaths he gave to boot,  
 That we were very welcome to 't ;  
 And to confirm it, brought his spouse  
 With flowing flagons to carouse.  
 'T was ordered then both foot and horse,  
 To Mostown should direct their course ;  
 We serenaded the old man,  
 Said we were welcome ev'ry one,  
 There we regal'd some days and nights  
 With various pastimes and delights.  
 What churl dare kill a goose or how  
 Sit down to eat his Christmas prog,  
 His barrel tap or give it vent,  
 Without due notice to them sent ;  
 'T were better for him go to war  
 Against the Turks, the Moors, or Czar,  
 Or throughout Europe range and roam,  
 Than think to live in peace at home.

“ This was the case in days of yore,  
 Sung by a poet heretofore,

' Raheen they ruin'd, and by their cunning skill  
 ' Drew up the sluices, and drown'd Mooney's mill,  
 ' Poor Sam they banish'd, Dally once did yield,  
 ' But they too sure of conquest lost the field.  
 ' Keenoge in ashes, by their valour's laid,  
 ' And Ballimacallin's night and day afraid ;  
 ' Each neighbouring village rack'd with new alarms  
 ' Imploring peace submitted to their arms.  
 ' They had free quarters many a campaign,  
 ' At Umno-more, Duniel, and Clunebane.'''

Rack-rents and their evils, are adverted to in another place as the standing grievance of the country.

" Though every rent roll now is double,  
 'Tis still attended with more trouble ;  
 The tenants rack'd they run away,  
 For they must go to gaol, or pay :  
 This cuts out work for the appraisers,  
 And makes some landed men turn graziers,  
 Who, to keep up the rate of lands,  
 Do stock and keep them in their hands :  
 Some farms are left a long time waste,  
 Lest their new rent roll be disgraced,  
 For deeds and marriage settlements  
 Recite the present annual rents,  
 Which they presume will ne'er be less,  
 At least while they can find distress ;  
 For want of which they do re-enter,  
 As their estate, an old debenture,  
 And full possession still demanding,  
 Against all clauses notwithstanding.

" They advertise it then in print,  
 And all proposals must be sent  
 To them in writing without fail,  
 Who are the owners in fee-tail  
 With large encomiums on the farm,  
 That is enclos'd so snug and warm,  
 With rocks and bogs and rivulets,  
 Where you may fish, or lay your nets,



For eels, young salmon-trouts, and sprats,  
Where boys may catch them in their hats,  
A dwelling house in good repair,  
With offices such as they are,  
It lies within twelve miles of Carrick,  
A market town where stands a barrack ;  
But this indeed we needs must own,  
'Tis sixty miles from Dublin town.

“ Our tenant Patrick held it long,  
But then he had it for a song ;  
Some years ago 't was raised to five,  
But Patrick never since could thrive,  
And yet before his lease was out,  
His farm was canted round about ;  
Ralph screw'd the acre up to ten,  
To which the landlord put his pen,  
And thus he held it some few years,  
But still was running in arrears ;  
For mercy cries, Let me surrender ;  
The landlord then rejects the tender.  
Ralph thus involv'd in debt took leg,  
Now Pat and Ralph are forced to beg.  
No wonder bread corn should be dear,  
And that the poor should famine fear,  
When some rich men can scarce afford  
Good bread or drink to serve their board,  
Give sparingly their sour ale,  
With coarse black bread at ev'ry meal,  
Half bran, half bak'd with mouldy crust,  
Half sour, like leaven to your gust ;  
That 's seldom boulded through a sieve,  
On which a Swede could hardly live,  
The dregs of musty mouldy wheat,  
Which well bred dogs would scorn to eat,  
Who, in the sense of taste or smell,  
Their masters often do excel,  
And rather feed on carrion flesh,  
Than what the Squire buys fresh and fresh ;  
Just as Pat Tracy bought his coals,  
By halves, good lack ! and not by wholes,

Not by half ton, but by half barrel,  
Which made his wife with him to quarrel,  
To vent her passion and displeasure,  
That he should stint her of her measure.

“ At length when you make shift to dine,  
His worship gives you sour wine,  
He calls it Bourdeaux or Margoo,  
Which you must drink until you spew,  
And if you stir, he'll seize your throttle,  
To keep you for another bottle.  
' Dear Jack ! don't leave me, my dear cousin !  
' Till you and I drink out the dozen.'  
This is a sketch, we give in haste,  
Of some few modern men of taste.”

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.











